

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
Brigham Young University

http://www.archive.org/details/dramaticworksofw18999shak

MACBETH.



Macduff. I have no words,
My voice is in my sword ; thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out !

ACT V. SC. 7.

MACBETH

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

DR. JOHNSON thought it necessary to prefix to this play an apology for Shakespeare's magic;—in which he says, "A poet, who should now make the whole action of his tragedy depend upon enchantment, and produce the chief events by the assistance of supernatural agents, would be censured as transgressing the bounds of probability, be banished from the theatre to the nursery, and condemned to write fairy tales instead of tragedies." He then proceeds to defend this transgression upon the ground of the credulity of the poet's age; when "the scenes of enchantment, however they may be now ridiculed, were both by himself and his audience thought awful and affecting." By whom, or when (always excepting *French* criticism), these sublime conceptions were in danger of ridicule, he has not told us; and I sadly fear that this superfluous apology arose from the misgivings of the great critic's mind. Schlegel has justly remarked that, "Whether the age of Shakespeare still believed in witchcraft and ghosts, is a matter of perfect indifference for the justification of the use which, in Hamlet and Macbeth, he has made of pre-existing traditions. No superstition can ever be prevalent and widely diffused through ages and nations without having a foundation in human nature: on this foundation the poet builds; he calls up from their hidden abysses that dread of the unknown, that presage of a dark side of nature, and a world of spirits which philosophy now imagines it has altogether exploded. In this manner he is in some degree both the portrayer and the philosopher of a superstition; that is, not the philosopher who denies and turns into ridicule, but, which is still more difficult, who distinctly exhibits its origin to us in apparently irrational and yet natural opinions."—In another place the same admirable critic says—"Since *The Furies* of Æschylus, nothing so grand and terrible has ever been composed: The Witches, it is true, are not divine Eumenides, and are not intended to be so: they are ignoble and vulgar instruments of hell. They discourse with one another like women of the very lowest class; for this was

the class to which witches were supposed to belong. When, however, they address Macbeth their tone assumes more elevation: their predictions have all the obscure brevity, the majestic solemnity, by which oracles have in all times contrived to inspire mortals with reverential awe. We here see that the witches are merely instruments; they are governed by an invisible spirit, or the operation of such great and dreadful events would be above their sphere." Their agency was necessary; for natural motives alone would have seemed inadequate to effect such a change as takes place in the nature and dispositions of Macbeth. By this means the poet "has exhibited a more sublime picture to us: an ambitious but noble hero, who yields to a deep-laid hellish temptation; and all the crimes to which he is impelled by necessity, to secure the fruits of his first crime, cannot altogether eradicate in him the stamp of native heroism." He has therefore given a threefold division to the guilt of that crime. The first idea comes from that being whose whole activity is guided by a lust of wickedness. The weird sisters surprise Macbeth in the moment of intoxication after his victory, when his love of glory has been gratified; they cheat his eyes by exhibiting to him as the work of fate what can only in reality be accomplished by his own deed, and gain credence for their words by the immediate fulfilment of the first prediction. The opportunity for murdering the king immediately offers itself; Lady Macbeth conjures him not to let it slip; she urges him on with a fiery eloquence, which has all those sophisms at command that serve to throw a false grandeur over crime. Little more than the mere execution falls to the share of Macbeth; he is driven to it as it were in a state of commotion, in which his mind is bewildered. Repentance immediately follows; nay, even precedes the deed; and the stings of his conscience leave him no rest either night or day. But he is now fairly entangled in the snares of hell; it is truly frightful to behold that Macbeth, who once as a warrior could spurn at death, now that he dreads the prospect of the life to come, clinging with growing anxiety to his earthly existence, the more miserable it becomes, and pitilessly removing out of his way whatever to his dark and suspicious mind seems to threaten danger. However much we may abhor his actions, we cannot altogether refuse to sympathize with the state of his mind; we lament the ruin of so many noble qualities; and, even in his last defence, we are compelled to admire in him the struggle of a brave will with a cowardly conscience. The poet wishes to show that the conflict of good and evil in this world can only take place by the permission of Providence, which converts the curse that individual mortals draw down on their heads into a blessing to others. Lady Macbeth, who of all the human beings is the most guilty participator in the murder of the king, falls, through the horrors of her conscience, into a state of incurable

bodily and mental disease; she dies, unlamented by her husband, with all the symptoms of reprobation. Macbeth is still found worthy of dying the death of a hero on the field of battle. Banquo atones for the ambitious curiosity which prompted him to wish to know his glorious descendants by an early death, as he thereby rouses Macbeth's jealousy; but he preserved his mind pure from the bubbles of the witches: his name is blessed in his race, destined to enjoy for a long succession of ages that royal dignity which Macbeth could only hold during his own life. In the progress of the action, this piece is altogether the reverse of Hamlet: it strides forward with amazing rapidity from the first catastrophe (for Duncan's murder may be called a catastrophe) to the last. Thought, and done! is the general motto; for, as Macbeth says:—

> 'The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
> Unless the deed go with it.'

"In every feature we see a vigorous heroic age in the hardy North, which steels every nerve. The precise duration of the action cannot be ascertained,—years, perhaps, according to the story; but we know that to the imagination the most crowded time appears always the shortest. Here we can hardly conceive how so very much can be compressed into so narrow a space; not merely external events—the very innermost recesses of the minds of the persons of the drama are laid open to us. It is as if the drags were taken from the wheels of time, and they rolled along without interruption in their descent. Nothing can equal the power of this picture in the excitation of horror. We need only allude to the circumstance attending the murder of Duncan, the dagger that hovers before the eyes of Macbeth, the vision of Banquo at the feast, the madness of Lady Macbeth; what can we possibly say on the subject that will not rather weaken the impression? Such scenes stand alone, and are to be found only in this poet; otherwise the tragic muse might exchange her mask for the head of Medusa*."

Shakespeare followed the chronicle of Holinshed, and Holinshed borrowed his narration from the Chronicles of Scotland, translated by John Bellenden, from the Latin of Hector Boethius, and first published at Edinburgh in 1541.

"Malcolm the Second, king of Scotland, had two daughters. The eldest was married to Crynin, the father of Duncan, Thane of the isles, and western parts of Scotland; and on the death of Malcolm without male issue Duncan succeeded to the throne. Malcolm's second daughter was married to Sinel, Thane of Glamis, the father of Macbeth. Duncan, who married the sister of Siward,

---

* Lectures on Dramatic Literature, by A. W. Schlegel, translated by John Black, London, 1815, vol. ii. p. 200.

Earl of Northumberland, was murdered by his cousin-german Macbeth in the castle of Inverness about the year 1040 or 1045. Macbeth was himself slain by Macduff, according to Boethius in 1061, according to Buchanan in 1057, at which time Edward the Confessor reigned in England.

In the reign of Duncan, Banquo having been plundered by the people of Lochaber of some of the king's revenues, which he had collected, and being dangerously wounded in the affray, the persons concerned in this outrage were summoned to appear at a certain day. But they slew the serjeant-at-arms who summoned them, and chose one Macdonwald as their captain. Macdonwald speedily collected a considerable body of forces from Ireland and the Western Isles, and in one action gained a victory over the king's army. In this battle Malcolm, a Scottish nobleman (who was lieutenant to Duncan in Lochaber) was slain. Afterwards Macbeth and Banquo were appointed to the command of the army; and Macdonwald, being obliged to take refuge in a castle in Lochaber, first slew his wife and children, and then himself. Macbeth, on entering the castle, finding his dead body, ordered his head to be cut off and carried to the king, at the castle of Bertha, and his body to be hung on a high tree.

At a subsequent period, in the last year of Duncan's reign, Sueno, king of Norway, landed a powerful army in Fife, for the purpose of invading Scotland. Duncan immediately assembled an army to oppose him, and gave the command of two divisions of it to Macbeth and Banquo, putting himself at the head of a third. Sueno was successful in one battle, but in a second was routed; and, after a great slaughter of his troops, he escaped with ten persons only, and fled back to Norway. Though there was an interval of time between the rebellion of Macdonwald and the invasion of Sueno, Shakespeare has woven these two actions together, and immediately after Sueno's defeat the present play commences.

It is remarkable that Buchanan has pointed out Macbeth's history as a subject for the stage. "Multa hic fabulose quidam nostrorum affingunt; sed quia *theatris* aut Milesiis fabulis sunt aptiora quam historiæ, ea omitto."—*Rerum Scot. Hist. Lib.* vii.

Milton also enumerates the subject among those he considered well suited for tragedy, but it appears that he would have attempted to preserve the unity of time by placing the relation of the murder of Duncan in the mouth of his ghost.

Macbeth is one of the latest, and unquestionably one of the noblest efforts of Shakespeare's genius. Equally impressive in the closet and on the stage, where to witness its representation has been justly pronounced "the first of all dramatic enjoyments." Malone places the date of its composition in 1606, and it has been supposed to convey a dexterous and delicate compliment to James the First, who derived his lineage from Banquo,

and first united the threefold sceptre of England, Scotland, and Ireland. At the same time the monarch's prejudices on the subject of demonology were flattered by the choice of the story.

It was once thought that Shakespeare derived some hints for his scenes of incantation from The Witch, a tragi-comedy, by John Middleton, which, after lying long in manuscript, was published about thirty years since by Isaac Reed; but Malone* has with considerable ingenuity shown that Middleton's drama was most probably written subsequently to Macbeth.

Malone has an elaborate argument to prove that Macbeth was written in 1606, which he supports by the allusions to the cheapness of corn, and to the doctrine of equivocation promulgated by Garnet, who was executed in 1606, occurring in the speech of the Porter in the third Scene of the second Act. What we know for certain is, that the play was performed on the 20th of April, 1610, at the Globe Theatre, when Dr. Forman, the astrologer, witnessed its representation, and gives an abstract of the plot in his Diary. We know not, however, whether it was then new to the stage; and the allusion to the union of the three kingdoms by the accession of King James, in the first Scene of Act iv.—

"Some I see
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry,"

seems to point to an earlier period. It appears from a passage in Kemp's Nine Daies Wonder, printed in 1600, that a ballad existed upon the subject, but the allusion is somewhat obscure. The play was first printed in the folio of 1623.

---

* See the chronological order of the plays in the late Variorum Edition, by Mr. Boswell, vol. ii. p. 420.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUNCAN, King *of* Scotland.
MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, } *his Sons.*
MACBETH, BANQUO, } *Generals of the King's Army.*
MACDUFF, LENOX, ROSSE, MENTETH, ANGUS, CATHNESS, } *Noblemen of* Scotland
FLEANCE, *Son to* Banquo.
SIWARD, Earl *of* Northumberland, *General of the English Forces.*
YOUNG SIWARD, *his Son.*
SEYTON, *an* Officer *attending on* Macbeth.
Son to Macduff.
An English Doctor. A Scotch Doctor.
A Soldier. A Porter. An old Man.

LADY MACBETH*.
LADY MACDUFF.
Gentlewoman *attending on* Lady Macbeth.
Hecate, and three Witches†.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, *and* Messengers.
The Ghost of Banquo, *and several other* Apparitions.

SCENE, *in the end of the Fourth Act, lies in* England; *through the rest of the play, in* Scotland; *and, chiefly, at* Macbeth's Castle.

---

* Lady Macbeth's name was Gruach filia Bodhe, according to Lord Hailes. Andrew of Wintown in his Cronykil informs us, that she was the widow of Duncan; a circumstance with which Shakespeare was of course unacquainted.

† As the play now stands, in Act iv. Sc. 1, three other witches make their appearance.

MACBETH.

ACT I.

Scene I. *An open Place.*

Thunder and Lightning. Enter three Witches.

1 *Witch.*

WHEN shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
2 *Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done[1],
When the battle's lost and won.
3 *Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.

[1] *When the hurlyburly's done.* In Adagia Scotica, or a Collection of Scotch Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases; collected by R. B. very useful and delightful. *Lond.* 12°. 1668:—

"Little kens the wife that sits by the fire
How the wind blows cold in *hurle burle swyre.*"

Peacham, in his Garden of Eloquence, 1577, shows what was the ancient acceptation of the word among us: "Onomatopeia, when we invent, devise, fayne, and make a name imitating the sound of that it signifyeth, as *hurlyburly*, for an *uprore* and *tumultuous stirre.*" So in Baret's Alvearie, 1573:—"But harke yonder: what *hurlyburly* or *noyse* is yonde: what *sturre ruffling* or *bruite* is that?"—The witches could not mean when the *storm* was done, but when the *tumult of the battle* was over; for they are to meet again in lightning, thunder, and rain: their element was a storm. Thus in Arthur Wilson's History of James I. p. 141—"Being in a citie not very defensible, among a wavering people, and a conquering enemy, in the field, took time by the foretop, and in this *hurlieburlie* the next morning left Prague."

1 *Witch.* Where the place?
2 *Witch.* Upon the heath:
3 *Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.
1 *Witch.* I come, Graymalkin!
2 *Witch.* Paddock calls[2]:
3 *Witch.* Anon.
All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air[3].
[Witches *vanish.*

Scene II. *A Camp near* Fores.

Alarum within. Enter King Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lenox, *with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Soldier*[1].

Dun. What bloody man is that? He can report.
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

[2] Upton observes that, to understand this passage, we should suppose one familiar calling with the voice of a *cat*, and another with the croaking of a *toad*. A *paddock* most generally signified a *toad*, though it sometimes means a frog. What we now call a toadstool was anciently called a *paddock-stool*.

[3] I follow Mr. Hunter's regulation of this passage though unauthorised by the old arrangement, because, with him, I think it clearly indicated by the subsequent *three times three* of the witches:—

"Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again to make up nine."

Coleridge observes that "The Weird Sisters are as true a creation of Shakespeare's as his Ariel and Caliban,—fates, fairies, and materializing witches being the elements. They are wholly different from any representation of witches in the contemporary writers, and yet presented a sufficient external resemblance to the creatures of vulgar prejudice to act immediately on the audience. Their character consists in the imaginative disconnected from the good; they are the shadowy obscure and fearfully anomalous of physical nature,—elemental avengers without sex or kin."

[1] The first folio reads *captain*.

Mal. This is the sergeant[2],
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity:—Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil,
As thou didst leave it.

Sold. Doubtful it stood;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together,
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald
(Worthy to be a rebel; for to that[3]
The multiplying villainies of nature
Do swarm upon him), from the western isles
Of Kernes and Gallowglasses is supplied[4];
And fortune, on his damned quarry[5] smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore[6]; but all's too weak[7];
For brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name),

[2] *Sergeants*, in ancient times, were not the petty officers now distinguished by that title; but men performing one kind of feudal military service, in rank next to esquires.

[3] Vide Tyrwhitt's Glossary to Chaucer, v. *for*; and Pegge's Anecdotes of the English Language, p. 205. *For to that* means no more than *for that*; or *cause that*. The late editions erroneously point this passage, and as erroneously explain it. I follow the punctuation of the first folio.

[4] i. e. *supplied with armed troops so named*. *Of* and *with* are indiscriminately used by our ancient writers. *Gallowglasses* were heavy armed foot soldiers of Ireland and the western isles: *Kernes* were the lighter armed troops. See Ware's Antiquit. c. xii. p. 57, or Dissertation on the Antient History of Ireland. Dublin, 1753, 8vo. p. 70.

[5] *But fortune on his damned quarry smiling*. *Quarry* is a term borrowed from the chase, and signified the game pursued; from Coriolanus, Act i. Sc. 1, we gather it signified also a heap of what was killed in the chase:—

"I'd make a *quarry*
With thousands of these quartered slaves, as high
As I could pitch my lance."

Damned is *doomed*, or *condemned*; *quarrel* has been improperly substituted.

[6] The meaning is *that Fortune, while she smiled on him, deceived him.*

[7] Thus the old copy. It has been suggested that we should read *all-to-weak*, an idiom frequent in our older language, and

Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smok'd with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion,
Carv'd out his passage, till he fac'd the slave;
And ne'er[8] shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

Dun. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

Sold. As whence the sun 'gins his reflexion
Shipwracking storms and direful thunders break[9];
So from that spring, whence comfort seem'd to come,
Discomfort swells. Mark, king of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,
Compell'd these skipping Kernes to trust their heels;
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
With furbish'd arms, and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

Dun. Dismay'd not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

Sold. Yes; as sparrows, eagles; or the hare, the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report, they were
As cannons overcharg'd with double cracks[10];
So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:

which is even used by Milton, who has *all-to-ruffled*, where *all-to* is merely augmentative: I doubt whether change is necessary here, as the old reading is perfectly intelligible.

[8] The old copy reads *which nev'r.*

[9] The allusion is to the storms that prevail in spring, at the vernal equinox—the equinoctial gales. The beginning of the reflexion of the sun (Cf. So from that Spring) is the epoch of his passing from the severe to the milder season, opening however with storms. *Break* is not in the first folio. The second has *breaking.* Pope substituted *break.*

[10] *Cracks,* that is *reports.* So in the old play of King John, 1591:—

"As harmless and without effect,
As is the echo of a cannon's *crack.*"

The anachronism of mentioning *cannon* as in use at this early period was disregarded by the poet, who has again mentioned them as in use in the reign of King John.

Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,
I cannot tell:——
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

Dun. So well thy words become thee, as thy wounds;
They smack of honour both:—Go, get him surgeons.
[*Exit* Soldier, *attended.*

Enter ROSSE *and* ANGUS.

Who comes here?

Mal. The worthy thane of Rosse.

Len. What a haste looks through his eyes!
So should he look, that seems to speak things strange[11].

Rosse. God save the king!

Dun. Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

Rosse. From Fife, great king;
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky[12]
And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
The thane of Cawdor, 'gan a dismal conflict:
Till that Bellona's bridegroom[13] lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons[14],
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit: And, to conclude,
The victory fell on us;——

Dun. Great happiness!

Rosse. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;

[11] *That seems to speak things strange*, i. e. *that seems about to speak them.*

[12] So in King John:—

"*Mocking* the air with *colours* idly spread."

[13] By *Bellona's bridegroom* Shakespeare means *Macbeth. Lapp'd in proof* is *defended by armour of proof.*

[14] *Confronted him with self-comparisons.* By *him* is meant *Norway*, and by *self-comparisons* is meant *that he gave him as good as he brought, showed that he was his equal.*

Nor would we deign him burial of his men,
Till he disbursed, at Saint Colmes' Inch[15],
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

Dun. No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest:—Go, pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Rosse. I'll see it done.

Dun. What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A Heath.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

1 *Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?

2 *Witch.* Killing swine.

3 *Witch.* Sister, where thou?

1 *Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd:—
Give me, quoth I:
Aroint thee[1], *witch!* the rump-fed ronyon[2] cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:

[15] *Colmes'* is here a dissyllable. *Colmes' Inch*, now called *Inch-comb*, is a small island, lying in the Firth of Edinburgh, with an abbey upon it dedicated to St. Columb. *Inch* or *inse*, in Erse, signifies an island.

[1] The etymology of this imprecation is yet to seek. *Rynt ye* for *out with ye! stand off!* is still used in Cheshire; where there is also a proverbial saying, "*Rynt ye, witch*, qouth Besse Locket to her mother." Tooke thought it was from *roynous*, and might signify "a scab or scale on thee!" The French have a phrase of somewhat similar sound and import—"*Arry-avant*, away there ho!" Mr. Douce thinks that "*aroint* thee" will be found to have a Saxon origin. The instance of its early use adduced by Mr. Hunter, from Berchyl's Rebellion of Perkin Warbeck, cited in the Monthly Mirror, is a palpable and clumsy forgery, possibly by Tom Hill.

[2] *Rump-fed ronyon*, a *scabby* or *mangy woman fed on offals*; the *rumps* being formerly part of the emoluments or kitchen fees of the cooks in great houses.

But in a sieve I'll thither sail[3],
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

2 *Witch.* I'll give thee a wind[4].

1 *Witch.* Th' art kind.

3 *Witch.* And I another.

1 *Witch.* I myself have all the other;
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card[5].

[3] In The Discovery of Witchcraft, by Reginald Scott, 1584, he says it was believed that witches "could sail in an egg-shell, a cockle or muscle-shell through and under the tempestuous seas." And in another pamphlet, "Declaring the damnable Life of Doctor Fian, a notable Sorcerer, who was burned at Edenborough in Januarie last, 1591"—"All they together went to sea, each one in a riddle or cive, and went in the same very substantially, with flaggons of wine making merrie, and drinking by the way in the same riddles or cives," &c.

Sir W. D'Avenant, in his Albovine, 1629, says:—

"He sits like a witch *sailing in a sieve.*"

It was the belief of the times that though a witch could assume the form of any animal she pleased, the *tail* would still be wanting.

[4] This free gift of a wind is to be considered as an act of sisterly friendship; for witches were supposed to sell them. So in Summer's Last Will and Testament, 1600:—

"In Ireland and in Denmark both
Witches for gold will *sell a man a wind*,
Which, in the corner of a napkin wrapp'd,
Shall blow him safe unto what coast he will."

See Harington's note on the 38th Book of Orlando Furioso, and Giles Fletcher's Russe Commonwealth, 1591, p. 77 b. quoted by Mr. Hunter. The following note in Braithwaite's "Two Lancashire Lovers" shows the universality of the notion:—"The incomparable Barclay in his *Mirror of Minde*, cap. 8, discovering Norway to be a rude nation, and with most men who have conversed or commerced with them, held infamous for Witchcraft. They, by report, saith he, "can *sell Windes*, which those that saile from thence doe buy, equalling by a true prodigy the fabulous story of Ulisses and Æolus. And these *Penell Pugges* [i. e. *witches of the Penell Hills*] have affirmed the like upon their own confession."

[5] i. e. *the sailor's chart; carte-marine.* The words *to show* are

I'll drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid[6]:
Weary sev'n-nights, nine times nine,
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine[7]:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-toss'd[8].
Look what I have.

2 *Witch.* Show me, show me.

1 *Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wrack'd, as homeward he did come. [*Drum within*

3 *Witch.* A drum, a drum;
Macbeth doth come.

All. The weird sisters[9], hand in hand,

supplied in Mr. Collier's folio, but we are not warranted in supplying rhymes which may not have been intended.

[6] *Forbid*, i. e. *forspoken, unhappy, charmed* or *bewitched.* The explanation of Theobald and Johnson, "*interdicted* or under a curse," is erroneous. A *forbodin* fellow, Scotice, still signifies an unhappy one.

[7] This was supposed to be put in execution by means of a waxen figure. Holinshed, speaking of the witchcraft practised to destroy King Duff, says that they found one of the witches roasting, upon a wooden broach, an image of wax at the fire, resembling in each feature the king's person, &c.—"for as the image did waste afore the fire, so did the bodie of the king break forth in sweat: and as for the words of the inchantment, they served to keepe him still waking *from sleepe.*" This may serve to explain the foregoing passage:—

"Sleep shall, neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid."

[8] In the pamphlet about Dr. Fian, already quoted—"Againe it is confessed, that the said christened cat was the cause of the *Kinge's majestie's shippe, at his coming forth of Denmarke, had a contrarie winde to the rest of his shippes* then being in his companie."—"And further the said witch declared, that his majestie had never come safely from the sea, if his faith had not prevailed above their intentions." To this circumstance, perhaps, Shakespeare's allusion is sufficiently plain.

[9] The old copy has *weyward*, probably to indicate the pronunciation; it is also used by Heywood. *Weird*, from the Saxon

Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about;
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine:
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

Macb. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Ban. How far is't call'd to Forres?—What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire;
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips:—You should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macb. Speak, if you can;—What are you?

1 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis[10]!

2 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

3 *Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter.

Ban. Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?—I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical[11], or that indeed

wyrd, a *witch*, Shakespeare found in Holinshed. In Troilus and Cressid, Chaucer uses *wierdes* for *destinies*, and in the Ortus Vocabulorum we have "Cloto—Anglice, one of the *three wyrde systers*." Gawin Douglas, in his translation of Virgil, renders the *parcæ* by *weird sisters*.

[10] The thaneship of Glamis was the ancient inheritance of Macbeth's family. The castle where they lived is still standing, and was lately the magnificent residence of the Earl of Strathmore. Gray has given a particular description of it in a Letter to Dr. Wharton.

[11] *Are ye fantastical*, i. e. *creatures of fantasy or imagination*.

Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace, and great prediction
Of noble having[12], and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt[13] withal; to me you speak not:
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say, which grain will grow, and which will not
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours, nor your hate.

1 *Witch.* Hail!

2 *Witch.* Hail!

3 *Witch.* Hail!

1 *Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

2 *Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.

3 *Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So, all hail, Macbeth, and Banquo!

1 *Witch.* Banquo, and Macbeth, all hail!

Macb. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's[14] death, I know, I am thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say, from whence
You owe this strange intelligence! or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetick greeting?—Speak, I charge you. [Witches *vanish.*

Ban. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them.—Whither are they vanish'd?

Macb. Into the air; and what seem'd corporal, melted
As breath into the wind.—'Would they had staid!

Ban. Were such things here, as we do speak about?

[12] *Having*, i. e. *estate, fortune.*

[13] *Rapt* is rapturously affected; *extra se raptus.*

[14] *Sinel.* Dr. Beattie conjectured that the real name of this family was *Sinane*, and that *Dunsinane*, or *the hill* of Sinane, from thence derived its name.

Or have we eaten on the insane root[15],
That takes the reason prisoner?

Macb. Your children shall be kings.

Ban. You shall be king.

Macb. And thane of Cawdor too; went it not so?

Ban. To the selfsame tune, and words. Who's here?

Enter ROSSE *and* ANGUS.

Rosse. The king hath happily receiv'd, Macbeth,
The news of thy success: and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebel's fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend,
Which should be thine, or his. Silenc'd with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as tale[16],
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And pour'd them down before him.

[15] The *insane root* was probably *henbane.* In Batman's Commentary on Bartholome de Propriet. Rerum, a book with which Shakespeare was familiar, is the following passage:—"Henbane is called *insana*, mad, for the use thereof is perillous; for if it be eate or dronke it breedeth madnesse, or slow lykenesse of sleepe. Therefore this hearb is called commonly mirilidium, for it taketh away wit and reason."

[16] *As thick as tale came post with post*, i. e. *posts arrived as fast as they could be counted.* The old copy reads *can.* Rowe made the emendation. "*Thicke*," says Baret, "that cometh often and *thicke* together; creber, frequens, *frequent, souvent-venant.*" And again: "Crebritas literarum, the often sending, or *thicke* coming of letters. *Thicke* breathing, anhelitus creber." Shakespeare twice uses "to speak *thick*" for "to speak *quick.*" To *tale* or tell is to *score* or *number.* Rowe altered it to "as quick as *hail.*" Mr. Hunter approves that reading, which Mr. Dyce inclines to think may be right, as we have it in Drayton's Battaile of Agincourt;—

"Out of the towne came quarries *thick as haile.*"

But *a shower of arrows*, and *a rapid succession of messengers* are very distinct things.

Ang. We are sent,
To give thee, from our royal master, thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight, not pay thee.

Rosse. And, for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

Ban. What, can the devil speak true?

Macb. The thane of Cawdor lives? Why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?

Ang. Who was the thane, lives yet;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combin'd
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage; or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd, and prov'd,
Have overthrown him.

Macb. Glamis, and thane of Cawdor:
The greatest is behind.—Thanks for your pains.—
Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me,
Promis'd no less to them?

Ban. That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle[17] you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray us
In deepest consequence.—
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

Macb. Two truths are told,

[17] *Enkindle* means *encourage you to expect the crown.* A similar expression occurs in As You Like It, Act i. Sc. 1:—
"Nothing remains but that I *kindle* the boy thither."

As happy prologues to the swelling act[18]
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.—
This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill; cannot be good:—If ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion[19]
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings[20]:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single[21] state of man, that function
Is smother'd in surmise; and nothing is,
But what is not[22].

Ban. Look, how our partner's rapt.

Macb. If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir.

Ban. New honours come upon him
Like our strange garments; cleave not to their mould,
But with the aid of use.

[18] *As happy prologues to the swelling act.* So in the prologue to King Henry V.— "Princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the *swelling* scene."

[19] *Suggestion*, i. e. *temptation.*

[20] i. e. *the presence of objects of fear.*
So in The Tragedie of Crœsus, by Lord Sterline, 1604:—
"For as the shadow seems more monstrous still
Than doth the substance whence it hath the being,
So *th' apprehension of approaching ill*
Seems greater than itself, whilst fears are lying."

[21] By his *single state of man*, Macbeth means his *simple condition of human nature. Single soul*, for a simple or weak guileless person, was the phraseology of the poet's time. *Simplicity* and *singleness* were synonymous.

[22] *But what is not.* Shakespeare has something like this sentiment in King Richard II.—
"Is nought but shadows
Of what is not."

Macb. Come what come may;
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.
Ban. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.
Macb. Give me your favour:—
My dull brain was wrought with things forgotten.
Kind gentlemen, your pains are register'd
Where every day I turn the leaf to read them—
Let us toward the king.—
Think upon what hath chanc'd: and, at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it[23], let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.
Ban. Very gladly.
Macb. Till then, enough.—Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. Fores. *A Room in the Palace.*

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENOX, *and* Attendants.

Dun. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not[a]
Those in commission yet return'd?
Mal. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die: who did report,
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons;
Implor'd your highness' pardon; and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him, like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death[1],

[23] *The interim having weigh'd it. The interim* is probably here used adverbially—"You having weighed it *in* the interim."

[a] This is the reading of the second folio. The first has, "*Or* not."

[1] *Studied in his death* is *well instructed in the art of dying.* Montaigne, with whom Shakespeare was familiar, says, "in my time, three of the most execrable persons that I ever knew, in all abominations of life, and the most infamous, have been seen to lie very orderly and quietly, and in every circumstance composed even unto perfection."

To throw away the dearest thing he ow'd[2],
As 'twere a careless trifle.

Dun. There's no art,
To find the mind's construction in the face[3]:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSSE, *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before,
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee: would, thou hadst less deserv'd;
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine[4]! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

Macb. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties: and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children, and servants;
Which do but what they should, by doing every thing
Safe toward your love and honour[5].

"The behaviour of the thane of Cawdor corresponds in almost every circumstance with that of the unfortunate Earl of Essex, as related by Stow, p. 793. His asking the queen's forgiveness, his confession, repentance, and concern about behaving with propriety on the scaffold, are minutely described by that historian." Steevens thinks that an allusion was intended "to the severity of that justice which deprived the age of one of its greatest ornaments, and Southampton, Shakespeare's patron, of his dearest friend."

[2] *Ow'd*, i. e. *owned, possessed.*

[3] We cannot construe the disposition of the mind by the lineaments of the face. In Shakespeare's ninety-third Sonnet we have a contrary assertion:—

"In many's *looks* the *false heart's history*
Is writ."

[4] It has been proposed to read, "Might have been *more*."

[5] *Safe toward your love and honour.* Sir William Blackstone would read:—"Safe toward *you* love and honour;" which he explains thus:—"Our duties are your children, and servants or

Dun. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour
To make thee full of growing.—Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserv'd, nor must be known
No less to have done so; let me enfold thee,
And hold thee to my heart.
Ban. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.
Dun. My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow[6].—Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know,
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm; whom we name hereafter,
The prince of Cumberland[7]: which honour must

vassals to your throne and state; who do but what they should, by doing everything with a saving of their love and honour toward you." He says that it has reference to the old feudal *simple homage*, which when done to a subject was always accompanied with a saving clause—"*saulf le foy que jeo doy a nostre seignor le roy*;" which he thinks suits well with the situation of Macbeth, now beginning to waver in his allegiance.

[6] *In drops of sorrow.*

"Lachrymas non sponte cadentes
Effudit, gemitusque expressit pectore læto;
Non aliter manifesta potens abscondere mentis
Gaudia, quam lachrymis." *Lucan*, lib. ix.

The same sentiment again occurs in The Winter's Tale. It is likewise employed in the first scene of Much Ado about Nothing.

[7] Holinshed says, "Duncan having two sons, &c. he made the elder of them, called Malcolm, prince of Cumberland, as it was thereby to appoint him his successor in his kingdome immediatelie after his decease, Macbeth sorely troubled herewith, for that he saw by this means his hope sore hindered (where, by the old laws of the realme the ordinance was, that if he that should succeed were not of able age to take the charge upon himself, he that was next of blood unto him should be admitted), he began to take counsel how he might usurpe the kingdome by force, having a just quarrel so to doe (as he tooke the matter) for that Duncane did what in him lay to defraud him of all manner of title and claime, which he might in time to come pretend, unto the crowne." Cumberland was anciently held as a fief of the English crown.

Not, unaccompanied, invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers.—From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macb. The rest is labour, which is not us'd for you:
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So, humbly take my leave.

Dun. My worthy Cawdor!

Macb. The prince of Cumberland!—That is a step,
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap, [*Aside.*
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires!
Let not light see my black and deep desires:
The eye wink at the hand! yet let that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

Dun. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant[8];
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman. [*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V. Inverness. *A Room in* Macbeth's *Castle.*

Enter LADY MACBETH, *reading a Letter.*

Lady M. They met me in the day of success; and I have learn'd by the perfect'st report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burnt in desire to question them further, they made themselves —air, into which they vanish'd. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives[1] from the king,

[8] *True, worthy Banquo,* &c. We must imagine that while Macbeth was uttering the six preceding lines, Duncan and Banquo had been conferring apart. Macbeth's conduct appears to have been their subject; and to some encomium supposed to have been bestowed on him by Banquo, the reply of Duncan refers.

[1] *Missives,* i. e. *messengers.*

who all-hail'd me, Thane of Cawdor; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with, *Hail, king that shalt be!* This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness; that thou might'st not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promis'd:—Yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness,
To catch the nearest way: Thou would'st be great;
Art not without ambition; but without
The illness should attend it. What thou would'st highly,
That would'st thou holily; would'st not play false,
And yet would'st wrongly win; thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, *Thus thou must do, if thou have it;*
And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
Than wishest should be undone[2]. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear[3];
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical[4] aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal. [*Enter an* Attendant.]
What is your tidings?

[2] "If thou would'st have that [i. e. the crown] which cries unto thee, *thus thou must do, if thou* would'st *have it;* and *thou must do* that which rather," &c. Mr. Hunter says:—"There should be a pause at *that* in the third line, the mind supplying 'is a thing.'"

[3] *That I may pour my spirits in thine ear.* So in Lord Sterline's Julius Cæsar, 1607:—

"Thou in my bosom used *to pour thy spright.*"

[4] *Which fate and metaphysical aid,* &c.; i. e. *supernatural aid.* We find *metaphysics* explained *things supernatural* in the old dictionaries. *To have thee crown'd* is *to desire that you should be crown'd.* Thus in All's Well that Ends Well:—

Attend. The king comes here to-night.
Lady M. Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, wer't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.
Attend. So please you, it is true; our thane is coming:
One of my fellows had the speed of him;
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.
Lady M. Give him tending,
He brings great news. [*Exit* Attendant.] The raven himself is hoarse[5],
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal[6] thoughts, unsex me here;
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
Stop up the access and passage to remorse;

"Our dearest friend
Prejudicates the business, and would *seem*
To have us make denial."

This phrase of Baret's:—"If all things be as ye would *have* them, or agreeable to your *desire*," is a common mode of expression with old writers.

[5] *The raven himself is hoarse.* The following passage from Drayton's Barons' Wars, Book v. St. 42, may serve as an elucidation of the text:—

"The ominous raven with a dismal cheer,
Through his hoarse beak of following horror tells."

[6] *That tend on mortal thoughts.* *Mortal* here is put for *deadly*. In another part of this play we have "the *mortal* sword," and "*mortal* murders." "*Mortal* war," and "*mortal* hatred," were current phrases. In Nashe's Pierce Pennilesse is a particular description of these spirits, and of their office. "The second kind of devils, which he most employeth, are those northern *Martii*, called the *spirits of revenge*, and the authors of massacres, and seedsmen of mischief; for they have commission to incense men to rapines, sacrilege, theft, murder, wrath, fury, and all manner of cruelties: and they command certain of the southern spirits to wait upon them, as also great Arioch, that is termed *the spirit of revenge*."

That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it[7]! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall[8] thee in the dunnest smoke of hell!
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes;
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark[9],
To cry, *Hold, hold!*—Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!

[7] The old copies have *hit*, the old form of the pronoun *it*, as Tooke has shown. Lady Macbeth's purpose was to be effected by action. "To keep peace between the effect and purpose," means, "to delay the execution of her purpose, to prevent its proceeding to effect." Sir Wm. Davenant's strange alteration of this play sometimes affords a reasonably good commentary upon it. Thus in the present instance:—

"Make thick
My blood, stop all passage to remorse;
That no relapses into mercy may
Shake my design, nor make it fall before
'Tis ripen'd to effect."

[8] To *pall*, from the Latin *pallio*, to *wrap*, to *invest*, to *cover* or *hide, as with a mantle or cloak.*

[9] Drayton, in his Mortimeriados, 1596, has an expression resembling that in the text:—

"The sullen *night in mistie* RUGGE *is wrapp'd.*"

And in his Polyolbion, which was not published till 1612, we again find it:—

"Thick vapours that like *ruggs* still hang the troubled air."

Coleridge has the following observation on this speech:—"Lady Macbeth, like all in Shakespeare, is a class individualized;—of high rank, left much alone, and feeding herself with day-dreams of ambition, she mistakes the courage of fantasy for the power of bearing the consequences and the realities of guilt. Hers is the mock fortitude of a mind deluded by ambition; she shames her husband with a superhuman audacity of fancy which she cannot support, but sinks in the season of remorse, and dies in suicidal agony. Her speech is that of one who had habitually familiarized her imagination to dreadful conceptions, and was trying to do so still more. Her invocations and requisitions are all the false efforts of a mind accustomed only hitherto to the shadows of the imagination, vivid enough to throw the every-day sub-

Enter MACBETH.

Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present[10], and I feel now
The future in the instant.
Macb. My dearest love,
Duncan comes here to-night.
Lady M. And when goes hence?
Macb. To-morrow,—as he purposes.
Lady M. O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book, where men
May read strange matters:—To beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under it. He that's coming
Must be provided for: and you shall put
This night's great business into my despatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.
Macb. We will speak further.
Lady M. Only look up clear;
To alter favour[11] ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

stances of life into shadow, but never as yet brought into direct contact with their own correspondent realities."

[10] *This ignorant present*, i. e. *beyond the present time*, which is, according to the process of nature, ignorant of the future.

[11] *Favour* is *countenance*.

SCENE VI. *The same. Before the Castle.*

Hautboys. Servants of Macbeth *attending.*

Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENOX, MACDUFF, ROSSE, ANGUS, *and* Attendants.

Dun. This castle hath a pleasant seat: the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
Ban. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his lov'd mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coigne of vantage[1], but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed, and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd,
The air is delicate[2].

[1] *Buttress nor coigne of vantage. Coigne* is a *corner-stone; the finish of a building at the angle.* So in Coriolanus, Act v. Sc. 4:—
"See you yon *coigne* o' the capitol? yon corner-stone."

[2] "This short dialogue," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "has always appeared to me a striking instance of what in painting is termed *repose.* The conversation very naturally turns upon the beauty of the castle's situation, and the pleasantness of the air; and Banquo, observing the martlet's nests in every recess of the cornice, remarks, that where those birds most breed and haunt the air is delicate. The subject of this quiet and easy conversation gives that repose so necessary to the mind after the tumultuous bustle of the preceding scenes, and perfectly contrasts the scene of horror that immediately succeeds. It seems as if Shakespeare asked himself, What is a prince likely to say to his attendants on such an occasion? Whereas the modern writers seem, on the contrary, to be always searching for new thoughts, such as would never occur to men in the situation which is represented. This also is frequently the practice of Homer, who, from the midst of battles and horrors relieves and refreshes the mind of the reader, by introducing some quiet rural image or picture of familiar domestic life." It is very incorrectly given in both the folios: where we have *barlet* for *martlet, must* for *most,* and absurd

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Dun. See, see! our honour'd hostess!
The love that follows us, sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you,
How you shall bid God yield[3] us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady M. All our service,
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single business, to contend
Against those honours deep and broad, wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: For those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits[4].

Dun. Where's the thane of Cawdor
We cours'd him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his purveyor: but he rides well:
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us: Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest to-night.

Lady M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt[5],
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

Dun. Give me your hand:

punctuation. Mr. Hunter might well remark "how carelessly the original editors performed their duties, at least in the first act of this tragedy."

[3] *How you shall bid God yield us*, i. e. *how you shall pray God reward us.* "We use it," says Palsgrave, "by manner of thanking a person." Mr. Hunter thus explains the passage:—"The affection which urges us to desire the society of our friends is sometimes the occasion of trouble to them, but we still feel grateful for the affection which is manifested. So you are to regard this visit; and with this view of it you will be disposed to thank us for the trouble we occasion you."

[4] i. e. *we as hermits*, or *beadsmen, shall ever pray for you.*

[5] *In compt*, i. e. *subject to accompt.*

Conduct me to mine host; we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *The same. A Room in the Castle.*

Hautboys and Torches. Enter, and pass over the Stage, a Sewer[1], *and divers Servants with Dishes and Service. Then enter* MACBETH.

Macb. If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly: If the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
With his surcease, success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of Time;
We'd jump the life to come[2]. But, in these cases,
We still have judgment here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: This even handed justice
Commends[4] the ingredients of our poison'd chalice

[1] A *sewer*, an officer so called from his placing the dishes on the table. *Asseour*, French; from *asseoir*, to place.

[2] The meaning of this passage appears to be:—"*'Twere well it were done quickly, if, when 'tis done, it were done* (or at an *end*); and that no sinister consequences would ensue. *If the assassination*, at the same time that it puts an end to Duncan's life, could make success certain, and that I might enjoy the crown unmolested;—*if the blow ended the matter here*, i. e. *in the present world, we'd jump the life to come*, i. e. *hazard* or *run the risk of what may happen in a future state.*" To *trammel up* was to *confine* or *tie up*. The legs of horses were *trammeled* to teach them to amble. *Surcease* is *cessation*. "To *surcease* or to *cease* from doing something: *supersedeo*, Lat.; *cesser*, Fr."—*Baret.* In the previous line the old copy has *schoole* for *shoal*.

[4] To *commend* was anciently used in the sense of the Latin *commendo*, to *commit*, to *address*, to *direct*, to *recommend*. Thus in All's Well that Ends Well:—

"*Commend* the paper to his gracious hand."

And in King Henry VIII.—"The king's majesty *commends* his

To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking off:
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers[5] of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition[6], which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other—How now! what news?

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. He has almost supp'd: Why have you left the chamber?

good opinion to you." In a subsequent scene of this play we have:—

"I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,
And so I do *commend* you to their backs."

"The pricke of conscience," says Holinshed, "caused him ever to feare, lest he should be served of the same *cup* as he had ministered to his predecessor."

[5] *The sightless couriers of the air* are what the poet elsewhere calls the *viewless winds*. Thus in Warner's Albion's England:—
"The scouring winds that *sightless* in the sounding air do fly." b. ii. c. xi.

[6] So in the Tragedy of Cæsar and Pompey, 1607:—

"Why think you, lords, that 'tis *ambition's spur*
That *pricketh* Cæsar to these high attempts?"

Malone has observed that "there are two distinct metaphors in this passage. I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent; I have nothing to *stimulate* me to the execution of my purpose but ambition, which is apt to overreach itself; this he expresses by the second image, of a person meaning to vault into his saddle, who, by taking too great a leap, will fall on the other side."

Macb. Hath he ask'd for me?
Lady M. Know you not, he has?
Macb. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.
Lady M. Was the hope drunk,
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time,
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valour,
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem;
Letting I dare not wait upon I would,
Like the poor cat i' the adage[7]?
Macb. Pr'ythee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more[8], is none.
Lady M. What beast[9] was't then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time, nor place,
Did then adhere[10], and yet you would make both:

[7] The adage of the cat is among Heywood's Proverbs, 1566: —"The cat would eate fishe, and would not wet her feete."

[8] *Who dares do more, is none.* The old copy, instead of "*do* more," reads "*no* more:" the emendation is Rowe's. A similar passage occurs in Measure for Measure, Act ii. Sc. 4:—

"Be that you are,
That is a woman: if you're more, you're none."

[9] It has here been suggested to read "What *boast* was't then;" but the opposition between *man* and *beast* was evidently intended; and to break the project of the murder could hardly be called a *boast*.

[10] *Adhere*, in the same sense as *cohere*.

They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck; and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn, as you
Have done to this.

Macb. If we should fail!

Lady M. We fail.
But screw your courage to the sticking-place[11],
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep
(Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him), his two chamberlains[12]
Will I with wine and wassel[13] so convince,
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck[14] only: When in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie, as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers; who shall bear the guilt

[11] *But screw your courage to the sticking-place.* Shakespeare seems to have taken his metaphor from the *screwing up* the chords of stringed instruments to their proper degree of tension, when the peg remains fast in its *sticking-place;* i. e. *in the place from which it is not to recede, or go back.*

[12] The circumstance relative to Macbeth's slaughter of Duncan's chamberlains is copied from Holinshed's account of King Duffe's murder by Donwald.

[13] *Wassel* is thus explained by Bullokar in his Expositor, 1616: "*Wassaile*, a term usual heretofore for *quaffing* and *carowsing;* but more especially signifying a merry cup (ritually composed, deckt and fill'd with country liquor) passing about amongst neighbours, meeting and entertaining one another on the vigil or eve of the new year, and commonly called the *wassail-bol.*" See Hamlet, Act i. Sc. 4.

To *convince* is to *overcome.* See p. 94, Act iv. Sc. 3, of this play.

[14] A *limbeck*, or *alembic*, is a vessel through which distilled liquors pass, in the state of fumes or vapour, into the recipient. So shall the *receipt*, i. e. *receptacle*, of reason be like this empty vessel.

Of our great quell[15]?

Macb. Bring forth men-children only!
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,
That they have done't?

Lady M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar
Upon his death?

Macb. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show;
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Scene I. *The same. Court within the Castle.*

Enter Banquo *and* Fleance, *and a* Servant, *with a Torch before them.*

Banquo.

HOW goes the night, boy?

Fle. The moon is down: I have not heard the clock.

Ban. And she goes down at twelve.

Fle. I take't, 'tis later, sir.

Ban. Hold, take my sword:—There's husbandry[1] in heaven,
Their candles are all out.—Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,

[15] *Quell* is *murder;* from the Saxon *quellan,* to kill.

[1] *Husbandry* here means *thrift, frugality.* In Romeo and Juliet we have a similar expression:—

"Night's *candles* are *burnt* out"

And yet I would not sleep: Merciful powers!
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts, that nature
Gives way to in repose[2]:—Give me my sword;—

Enter MACBETH, *and a* Servant *with a Torch.*

Who's there?

Macb. A friend.

Ban. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess[3] to your offices[4]:
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up[5]
In measureless content.

Macb. Being unprepar'd,
Our will became the servant to defect;
Which else should free have wrought[6].

Ban. All's well.

[2] It is apparent from what Banquo says afterwards, that he had been solicited in a dream to attempt something in consequence of the prophecy of the witches, that his waking senses were shocked at; and Shakespeare has here most exquisitely contrasted his character with that of Macbeth. Banquo is praying against being tempted to encourage thoughts of guilt even in his sleep; while Macbeth is hurrying into temptation, and revolving in his mind every scheme, however flagitious, that may assist him to complete his purpose. The one is unwilling to sleep, lest the same phantoms should assail his resolution again, while the other is depriving himself of rest through impatience to commit the murder.

[3] *Largess*, i. e. *bounty*.

[4] The old copy reads *offices*, which has been sometimes changed to *officers*; but by *offices* the domestic servants of the household are intended.

[5] *Shut up* is the reading of the first folio, which must be taken to signify either that the king *concluded*, or that he retired to rest, *shut himself up*. The second folio prints "shut *it* up," which can only be understood of the jewel enclosed in a case.

[6] "Being unprepared, our will (or desire to entertain the king honourably) became the servant to defect (*i. e.* was constrained by defective means, which else should free have wrought *i. e.* otherwise our zeal should have been manifest by more liberal entertainments." *Which* relates not to the last antecedent, *defect*, but to *will*.

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have show'd some truth.
Macb. I think not of them:
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.
Ban. At your kind'st leisure.
Macb. If you shall cleave to my consent[7],—when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.
Ban. So I lose none,
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchis'd, and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsel'd.
Macb. Good repose, the while!

[7] *Consent* is *accord, agreement,* a combination for a particular purpose. By "If you shall cleave to my consent," Macbeth means, "If you shall adhere to me, *i. e.* agree or accord with my views, when 'tis, *i. e.* when events shall fall out as they are predicted, it shall make honour for you." We have the word again in this sense in King Henry IV. Part II., where, speaking of Shallow and his servants, Falstaff says, "they flock together in *consent* like so many wild geese." So again in As You Like It, the usurping Duke says, after the flight of Rosalind and Celia:—

"Some villains of my court
Are of *consent* and sufferance in this."

Sir William Davenant's paraphrase of this passage shows that he understood it as I have explained it:—

"If when the prophecy begins to look like, you will
Adhere to me, it shall make honour for you."

Macbeth mentally refers to the crown which he expected to obtain in consequence of the murder that he was about to commit. *We* comprehend all that passes in his mind; but Banquo is still in ignorance of it. His reply is only that of a man who determines to combat every possible temptation to do ill; and therefore expresses a resolve that, in spite of future combinations of interest or struggles for power, he will attempt nothing that may obscure his present honours, alarm his conscience, or corrupt loyalty. Macbeth could never mean, while yet the success of his attack on the life of Duncan was uncertain, to afford Banquo the most dark or distant hint of his criminal designs on the crown. Had he acted thus incautiously, Banquo would naturally have become his accuser as soon as the murder had been discovered.

Ban. Thanks, sir; The like to you!

[*Exit* BANQUO *and* FLEANCE.

Macb. Go, bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[*Exit* Servant.

Is this a dagger, which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling, as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind; a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;
And on thy blade, and dudgeon[8], gouts[9] of blood,
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing:
It is the bloody business, which informs
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead[10], and wicked dreams abuse

[8] *Dudgeon* for *handle*; "a *dudgeon* dagger is a dagger whose handle is made of the root of box," according to Bishop Wilkins in the dictionary subjoined to his *Real Character*. *Dudgeon* is the *root of box*. It has not been remarked that there is a peculiar propriety in giving the word to Macbeth, the Scottish daggers having generally the handles of box-wood. Thus Torriano has:—"a *Scotch* or *dudgeon haft* dagger."

[9] *Gouts*, i. e. *drops*; from the French *gouttes*.

[10] Dryden's well-known lines in the Conquest of Mexico are here transcribed that the reader may observe the contrast between them and this passage of Shakespeare:—

"All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead,
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head,
The little birds in dreams their songs repeat,
And sleeping flow'rs beneath the night dews sweat,

The curtain'd sleeper[11]; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost[12].——Thou sure[13] and firm-set
earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my where-about,

Even lust and envy sleep!"

In the second part of Marston's Antonio and Mellida, 1602, we have the following lines:—

"'Tis yet the dead of night, yet all the earth is clutch'd
In the dull leaden hand of snoring sleep:
No breath disturbs the quiet of the air,
No spirit moves upon the breast of earth,
Save howling dogs, night-crows, and screeching owls,
Save meagre ghosts, Piero, and black thoughts.
I am great in blood,
Unequalled in revenge:—you horrid scouts
That sentinel swart night, give loud applause
From your large palms."

[11] The old copy has *sleepe*. The emendation was proposed by Steevens, and is well worthy of a place in the text; the word *now* having been formerly admitted to complete the metre. We have afterwards:— "A hideous trumpet call to parley
The *sleepers* of the house."

[12] The old copy reads *sides*: Pope made the alteration. Thus in The Faerie Queene, b. iv. c. viii.—

"With easy steps so soft as foot could *stride*."

In other places we have an *easy stride*, a *leisurable stride*, &c. And the poet himself, in his Rape of Lucrece:—

"Into the chamber wickedly he *stalks*,
And gazeth on her yet unstained bed."

Warburton observes, that the justness of the similitude is not very obvious. But a stanza from the same poem will explain it:—

"Now *stole upon the time in dead of night*,
When heavy sleep had clos'd up mortal eyes;
No comfortable *star did lend his light*,
No noise but owls' and *wolves' dead-boding cries*;
Now serves the season that they may surprise
The silly lambs. Pure thoughts are dead and still,
While lust *and* murder *wake to stain and kill*."

[13] The old copies, by a misprint, have *sowre*; and in the next line, "which *they may* walk."

And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it[14].—Whiles I threat, he lives;
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.
[*A bell rings*
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven, or to hell. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *The same*[1].

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk, hath made me bold:

[14] Macbeth would have nothing break through the universal silence that added such horror to the night, as well suited with the bloody deed he was about to perform. Burke, in his Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, observes, that "all general privations are great because they are terrible." The poets of antiquity have many of them heightened their scenes of terror by dwelling on the silence which accompanied them:—

"Dii quibus imperium et animarum umbræque *silentes*,
Et Chaos et Phlegethon, loca nocte *tacentia* late."—*Virgil.*

Statius, in describing the Lemnian massacre, notices the silence and solitude in a striking manner:—

"Conticuere domus," &c.

and when he enumerates the terrors to which Chiron had familiarized his pupil, he subjoins:—

"Nec ad vastæ trepidare *silentia* sylvæ."

Tacitus, describing the distress of the Roman army, under Cæcina, concludes by observing—"Ducemque terruit, *dira quies*. In all the preceding passages, as Pliny remarks, concerning places of worship, *silentia ipsa adoramus*. To these instances adduced by Steevens, Malone adds another from the second Æneid:—

"Vestigia retro
Observata sequor per noctem, et lumine lustro,
Horror ubique animos, simul ipsa *silentia* terrent."

and the well known lines which exposed Dryden to so much ridicule:—

"A *horrid stillness* first invades the ear,
And in that *silence* we the tempest hear."

[1] This can hardly be called a new scene, as there is no change of place.

What hath quench'd them, hath given me fire:—
Hark!—Peace!—It was the owl that shriek'd,
The fatal bellman, which gives the stern'st good-night.
He is about it: The doors are open;
And the surfeited grooms do mock their charge with snores:
I have drugg'd their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

Macb. [*Within.*] Who's there?—what, hoa!

Lady M. Alack! I am afraid they have awak'd,
And 'tis not done:—the attempt and not the deed,
Confounds us:—Hark!—I laid their daggers ready,
He could not miss 'em Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.—My husband!

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. I have done the deed:—Didst thou not hear a noise?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream, and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?

Macb. When?

Lady M. Now.

Macb. As I descended?

Lady M. Ay.

Macb. Hark!—
Who lies i' the second chamber?

Lady M. Donalbain.

Macb. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*

Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh in his sleep,
And one cried, *Murder!* that they did wake each other;
I stood and heard them: but they did say their prayers,

And address'd them again to sleep.

Lady M. There are two lodg'd together.

Macb. One cried, *God bless us!* and, *Amen*, the other;

As they had seen me, with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear; I could not say, "Amen,"
When they did say, God bless us.

Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.

Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce, Amen?
I had most need of blessing, and Amen
Stuck in my throat.

Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

Macb. Methought, I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep!—the innocent sleep;
Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleave[2] of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast;"—

Lady M. What do you mean?

Macb. Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep; and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more[3]!"

[2] *Sleave*, or *sleyd* silk, is unwrought silk, sometimes also called *floss* silk. It appears to be the coarse ravelled part separated by passing through the *sley* [slaie or reed-comb] of the weaver's loom; and hence called *sleaved* or *sleyed* silk. I suspect that *sleeveless*, which has puzzled the etymologists, is that which cannot be *sleaved*, *sleyded*, or unravelled; and therefore useless: thus a *sleeveless* errand would be a *fruitless* one. See Troilus and Cressida, Act v. Sc. 1, note 7. Mr. Knight is mistaken in thinking "*sleided* silk," in A Lover's Complaint, to mean *twisted* silk. *Floss* silk was the material most in use for the purpose of sealing letters. I have seen numerous old letters so fastened.

[3] Mr. Boswell thus explains this passage:—*Glamis hath murder'd sleep;* and therefore my lately acquired dignity can afford no comfort to one who suffers the agony of remorse,—*Cawdor*

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things: Go, get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.—
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: Go, carry them; and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again, I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers: The sleeping, and the dead,
Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood,
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt[4].

[*Exit. Knocking within*

Macb. Whence is that knocking?
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here! Ha! they pluck out mine eyes!
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood[5]

shall sleep no more; nothing can restore me to that peace of mind which I enjoyed in a comparatively humble state; the once innocent *Macbeth shall sleep no more.*

[4] This quibble occurs frequently in old plays. Shakespeare has it again in King Henry IV. Part II. Act iv. Sc. 4:—

" England shall double *gild* his treble *guilt.*"

And in King Henry V.—

" Have for the *gilt* of France, O *guilt* indeed."
" Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood," &c.

[5] Suscipit, ô Gellii, quantum non ultima Tethys,
Nec genitor nympharum abluit oceanus.
Catullus in Gellium, 83.

Οἶμαι γὰρ οὐτ' ἂν Ἴστρον, οὔτε Φᾶσιν ἄν
Νίψαι καθαρμῷ τήνδε τὴν στέγην.
Sophoc. Οιδιπ. 1228

Quis eluet me Tanais? aut quæ barbaris
Mœotis undis Pontico incumbens mari?
Non ipse toto magnus oceano pater

Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnardine[6],
Making the green—one red[7].

Re-enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knock.*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry:—retire we to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended[8].—[*Knocking.*] Hark! more knocking:
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers:—Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself[9]. [*Knock.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! Ay, would thou could'st? [*Exeunt.*

Tantum expirarit sceleris! *Senec. Hippol.*
Non, si Neptuni fluctu renovare operam des,
Non, mare si totum velit eluere omnibus undis.
Lucret. l. vi. ver. 1074.

Thus also, in The Insatiate Countess, by Marston, 1613:—

"Although the waves of all the northern sea
Should flow for ever through these guilty hands,
Yet the sanguinolent stain would extant be."

[6] To *incarnardine* is *to stain of a red colour.*

[7] In the old copy this line stands thus:—

"Making the Green one, Red."

The punctuation in the text was adopted by Steevens at the suggestion of Murphy. In Heywood's Robert Earl of Huntingdon we have a similar passage:—

"The multitudes of seas dyed red with blood."

[8] *Your constancy hath left you unattended*, i. e. *your courage has deserted you.* Vide note 13 on King Henry V. Act v. Sc. 2, p. 411.

[9] This is an answer to Lady Macbeth's reproof. "While I have *the thoughts* of this deed, it were best not know, or *be lost* to myself." In the next line the folio has "*I* would."

Scene III. *The same.*

Enter a Porter. [*Knocking within.*

Porter. Here's a knocking, indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old[1] turning the key. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock: Who's there, i' the name of Belzebub? Here's a farmer[2], that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty: Come in time; have napkins[3] enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock: Who's there, i' the other devil's name? 'Faith, here's an equivocator[4], that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock; Who's there? 'Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: Come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking.*] Knock, knock: Never at quiet! What are you?—But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire[5]. [*Knocking.*] Anon, anon; I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*

[1] *Old*, i. e. *frequent.*

[2] *Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty.* So in Hall's Satires, b. iv. sat. 6:—

"Each muckworme will be rich with lawless gaine,
Altho' he smother up mowes of seven yeares graine,
And hang'd himself when corne grows cheap againe."

[3] *Napkins*, i. e. *handkerchiefs.* In the dictionaries of the time *sudarium* is rendered by *napkin or handkerchief, wherewith we wipe away the sweat.*

[4] *An equivocator*, i. e. *a Jesuit.* That order were troublesome to the state, and held in odium in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. They were inventors of the execrable doctrine of *equivocation.*

[5] So in Hamlet:—

Enter MACDUFF *and* LENOX.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

Port. 'Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock[6]: and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

Macd. What three things does drink especially provoke?

Port. Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes: it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance: Therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to: in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

Macd. I believe, drink gave thee the lie last night.

Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat o' me: But I requited him for his lie; and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Macd. Is thy master stirring?—
Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

Enter MACBETH.

Len. Good-morrow, noble sir!

Macb. Good-morrow, both!

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

"Himself the *primrose path* of dalliance treads."
And in All's Well that Ends Well:—"The *flowery way* that leads to the great fire."

[6] i. e. *till three o'clock,* according to a passage in Romeo and Juliet:—

"The *second cock* has crow'd,
The curfew bell has toll'd: 'tis *three* o'clock."

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him; I have almost slipp'd the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know, this is a joyful trouble to you; But yet, 'tis one.

Macb. The labour we delight in, physicks[7] pain. This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call, For 'tis my limited service[8]. [*Exit* MACDUFF.

Len. Goes the king hence to-day?

Macb. He does: he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly; where we lay, Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say, Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death; And prophesying, with accents terrible, Of dire combustion, and confus'd events; New-hatch'd to the woful time, The obscure bird clamour'd the livelong night; Some say, the earth was feverous, and did shake.

Macb. 'Twas a rough night.

Len. My young remembrance cannot parallel A fellow to it.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. O horror! horror! horror! Tongue, nor heart, Cannot conceive, nor name thee[9]!

Macb. Len. What's the matter?

Macd. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece! Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope

[7] i. e. *alleviates it.* *Physick* is defined by Baret, a *remedie*, an *helping* or *curing*. So in The Tempest:—

"There be some sports are painful; and *their labour*
Delight in them sets off."

[8] *Limited service*, i. e. *service I am allowed to do.*

[9] It has been already observed that Shakespeare uses two negatives, not to make an affirmative, but to deny more strongly.

The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building.

Macb. What is't you say? the life?

Len. Mean you his majesty?

Macd. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon:—Do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.—Awake! awake!—
[*Exeunt* MACBETH *and* LENOX.
Ring the alarum-bell:—Murder! and treason!
Banquo, and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself!—up, up, and see
The great doom's image.——Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror!—Ring the bell.
[*Bell rings.*

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Lady M. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak,——

Macd. O, gentle lady,
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell[10].——

Enter BANQUO.

O Banquo! Banquo! our royal master's murder'd!

Lady M. Woe, alas! what, in our house?

[10] "The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder as it fell."
So in Hamlet:—
"He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech."
And in The Puritan, 1607:—"The punishments that shall follow you in this world would *with horrour kill the ear*, should hear them related."

Ban. Too cruel, any where.
Dear Duff, I pr'ythee, contradict thyself,
And say, it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH *and* LENOX.

Macb. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had liv'd a blessed time; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality:
All is but toys: renown, and grace, is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

Don. What is amiss?
Macb. You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd; the very source of it is stopp'd.
Macd. Your royal father's murder'd.
Mal. O, by whom?
Len. Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:
Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood,
So were their daggers, which, unwip'd, we found
Upon their pillows: they star'd, and were distracted;
No man's life was to be trusted with them.
Macb. O, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
Macd. Wherefore did you so?
Macb. Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate, and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outran the pauser reason.—Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood[11];

[11] *His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood.* To *gild* with blood is a very common phrase in old plays. See also King John, Act ii. Sc. 2. Johnson says, "It is not improbable that Shakespeare put these forced and unnatural metaphors into the mouth

And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature,
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore[12]: Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage, to make his love known?

Lady M. Help me hence, ho!

Macd. Look to the lady.

Mal. Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

Don. What should be spoken here,
Where our fate, hid in an auger-hole,
May rush, and seize us? Let's away; our tears
Are not yet brew'd. *Aside to each other.*

Mal. Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

Ban. Look to the lady:—

[LADY MACBETH *is carried out.*

And when we have our naked frailties hid[13],
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand; and, thence,

of Macbeth, as a mark of artifice and dissimulation, to show the difference between the studied language of hypocrisy and the natural outcries of sudden passion. This whole speech, so considered, is a remarkable instance of judgment, as it consists of antithesis only."

[12] *Breech'd with gore*, i. e. *covered with blood to their hilts.*

[13] i. e. *when we have clothed our half-dressed bodies.* The Porter had already said that this "place is too *cold* for hell," meaning the court-yard of the castle in which Banquo and the rest now are. So in Timon of Athens:—

"Call the creatures
Whose *naked natures* live in all the spight
Of wreakful heaven."

Against the undivulg'd pretence[14] I fight
Of treasonous malice.

Macd. And so do I.

All. So all.

Macb. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

All. Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but* MAL. *and* DON

Mal. What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy: I'll to England.

Don. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody[15].

Mal. This murderous shaft that's shot,
Hath not yet lighted[16]; and our safest way
Is, to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,

[14] *Pretence* is here put for *design* or *intention.* It is so used again in The Winter's Tale:—

"The *pretence* whereof being by circumstance partly laid open."

Thus again in the next scene:—

"What good could they *pretend*;"

i. e. *intend* to themselves: in the sense of the Latin *prætendo*, "to *design* or lay for a thing before it come," as the old dictionaries explain it. Banquo's meaning is—"in our present state of doubt and uncertainty about this murder, I have nothing to do but to put myself under the direction of God; and, relying on his support, I here declare myself an eternal enemy to this treason, and to all its *further designs that have not yet come to light.*"

[15] *The near in blood,*
The nearer bloody."

Meaning that he suspects Macbeth to be the murderer: for he was the nearest in blood to the two princes, being the cousin-german of Duncan.

[16] The allusion of the *unlighted shaft* appears to be—"The murderous shaft has not yet done all its intended mischief; I and my brother stand in the way of its aim, yet to be destroyed before it will reach its mark and do no more harm."

But shift away: There's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *Without the Castle.*

Enter ROSSE *and an* Old Man.

Old M. Threescore and ten I can remember well.
Within the volume of which time, I have seen
Hours dreadful, and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

Rosse. Ah, good father,
Thou see'st, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by th' clock, 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it[1]?

Old M. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place[2],
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at, and kill'd.

[1] "After the murder of King Duffe," says Holinshed, "for the space of six months togither there appeared no sunne by daye, nor moone by night, in anie part of the realme; but still the sky was covered with continual clouds; and sometimes such outrageous winds arose, with lightenings and tempests, that the people were in great fear of present destruction." It is evident that Shakespeare had this passage in his thoughts. Most of the portents here mentioned are related by Holinshed, as accompanying King Duffe's death: "there was a *sparhawk* strangled by an owl," and "horses of singular beauty and swiftness did eat their own flesh."

[2] *A falcon tow'ring in her pride of place*, a technical phrase in falconry for *soaring to the highest pitch.* Faulcon *haultain* was the French term for a towering or high flying hawk. Mr. Dyce has cited the following passage from Donne, addressing Sir H. Goodyere and speaking of his Hawk:—

'Which when herself she lessens in the aire,
You then first say that high enough *she towres.*"

Rosse. And Duncan's horses (a thing most strange and certain),
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would
Make war with mankind.

Old M. 'Tis said, they ate each other.

Rosse. They did so; to the amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon't. Here comes the good Macduff:—

Enter MACDUFF.

How goes the world, sir, now?

Macd. Why, see you not?

Rosse. Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?

Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

Rosse. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend[3]?

Macd. They were suborn'd:
Malcolm, and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

Rosse. 'Gainst nature still:
Thriftless ambition, that will ravin up
Thine own life's means!—Then 'tis most like,
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth[4].

Macd. He is already nam'd; and gone to Scone.
To be invested.

Rosse. Where is Duncan's body?

Macd. Carried to Colme-kill[5];

[3] *Pretend*, i. e. *intend*. See note 14, p. 50.

[4] "Macbeth, by his birth, stood next in succession to the crown after the sons of Duncan. King Malcolm, Duncan's predecessor, had two daughters, the eldest of whom was the mother of Duncan, the younger the mother of Macbeth."—*Holinshed.*

[5] *Colme-kill* is the famous *Iona*, one of the western isles mentioned by Holinshed as the burialplace of many ancient kings of Scotland. *Colme-kill* means the *cell* or *chapel of St. Columba*. See note 15, p. 12.

The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

Rosse. Will you to Scone?

Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

Rosse. Well, I will thither.

Macd. Well, may you see things well done there;—adieu!——

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

Rosse. Farewell, father.

Old M. God's benison go with you: and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. Fores. *A Room in the Palace.*

Enter BANQUO.

Banquo.

THOU hast it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As th' weird women promis'd; and, I fear,
Thou play'dst most foully for't; yet it was said,
It should not stand in thy posterity;
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them
(As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine),
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
And set me up in hope? But, hush; no more.

Senet sounded. Enter MACBETH, *as King:* LADY MACBETH, *as Queen;* LENOX, ROSSE, Lords, Ladies, *and* Attendants.

Macb. Here's our chief guest.

Lady M. If he had been forgotten,

It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing[a] unbecoming.

Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper[1], sir,
And I'll request your presence.

Ban. Let[2] your highness'
Command upon me; to the which, my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.

Macb. Ride you this afternoon?

Ban. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. We should have else desir'd your good advice
(Which still hath been both grave and prosperous),
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
Is't far you ride?

Ban. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better[3],
I must become a borrower of the night,
For a dark hour, or twain.

Macb. Fail not our feast.

Ban. My lord, I will not.

Macb. We hear, our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England, and in Ireland; not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: But of that to-morrow:
When, therewithal, we shall have cause of state,
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse: Adieu,
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

[a] *All-thing*, i. e. *every way*.

[1] *A solemn supper*. This was the phrase of Shakespeare's time for a feast or banquet given on a particular occasion, to *solemnize* any event, as a birth, marriage, coronation, &c. Howel, in a letter to Sir T. Hawke, 1636, says, "I was invited yesternight to a *solemne supper* by B. J. [Ben Jonson], where you were deeply remembered."

[2] Thus the old copy. Rowe has *Lay*, which was suggested by Davenant's alteration of the play. Monk Mason proposed to read *Set*.

[3] i. e. *if my horse does not go well*. Shakespeare often uses the comparative for the *positive* and *superlative*.

Ban. Ay my good lord: our time does call upon us[4].

Macb. I wish your horses swift, and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.—— [*Exit* BANQUO.
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night; to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone: while then, God be with you.
[*Exeunt* LADY MACBETH, Lords, Ladies, &c.
Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men
Our pleasure?

Atten. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

Macb. Bring them before us.— [*Exit* Atten.
To be thus is nothing;
But to be safely thus:—Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep; and in his royalty[5] of nature
Reigns that, which would be fear'd: 'Tis much he dares;
And, to that[6] dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none, but he
Whose being I do fear: and, under him,
My genius is rebuk'd; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters,
When first they put the name of King upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I fil'd[7] my mind;

[4] The folio has *upon's*, probably to avoid the trisyllabic ending and redundant syllable.

[5] *Royalty*, i. e. *nobleness.*

[6] *And to that*, i. e. *in addition to.*

[7] *Fil'd* is often used for *defiled.*

For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man[8],
To make them kings; the seed[9] of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to the utterance[10]!—Who's there?—

Re-enter Attendant, *with two* Murderers.

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.
[*Exit* Attendant.
Was it not yesterday we spoke together?
1 *Mur.* It was, so please your highness.
Macb. Well then,
Now have you consider'd of my speeches?
Know that 'twas he, in the times past,
Which held you so under fortune;
Which you thought had been our innocent self.
This I made good to you in our last conference,
Pass'd in probation with you:
How you were borne in hand[11]; how cross'd;
The instruments; who wrought with them:
And all things else, that might to half a soul
And to a notion craz'd, say, Thus did Banquo.
1 *Mur.* You made it known to us.

[8] *The common enemy of man.* Shakespeare repeats the phrase in Twelfth Night, Act iii. Sc. 4:—"Defy the devil: consider, he's an *enemy to mankind.*" The phrase was common among his cotemporaries; the word *fiend*, Johnson remarks, signifies *enemy.*

[9] The old copies have *seeds.*

[10] *To the utterance.* This phrase, which is found in writers who preceded Shakespeare, is borrowed from the French; *se battre à l'outrance*, to fight desperately or to extremity, even to death. The sense therefore is:—"Let fate, that has foredoomed the exaltation of Banquo's sons, enter the lists against me in defence of its own decrees, I will fight against it to the extremity, whatever be the consequence."

[11] To *lear in hand* is *to delude by encouraging hope and holding out fair prospects, without any intention of performance.*

Macb. I did so; and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature,
That you can let this go? Are you so gospell'd
To pray for this good man, and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave,
And beggar'd yours for ever?

1 *Mur.* We are men, my liege.

Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs.
Shoughs[12], water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are cleped
All by the name of dogs: the valued file[13]
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The house-keeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him clos'd; whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not in the worst rank of manhood, say it;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off;
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

2 *Mur.* I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incens'd, that I am reckless what
I do, to spite the world.

1 *Mur.* And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,

[12] *Shoughs* are probably what we now call *shocks.* Nashe, in his Lenten Stuffe, mentions them; "a trundle-tail tike or *shough* or two." *Cleped* is *called.*

[13] The *valued file* is the *descriptive list* wherein their value and peculiar qualities are set down; such a list of dogs may be found in Junius's Nomenclator, by Fleming.

That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't.

Macb. Both of you
Know, Banquo was your enemy.

2 *Mur.* True, my lord.

Macb. So is he mine: and in such bloody distance,
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: And though I could
With bare-fac'd power sweep him from my sight,
And bid my will avouch it; yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Whom I myself struck down: and thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love;
Masking the business from the common eye,
For sundry weighty reasons.

2 *Mur.* We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.

1 *Mur.* Though our lives——

Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves:
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' th' time[14],
The moment on't: for't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace; always thought,
That I require a clearness[15]: And with him
(To leave no rubs, nor botches, in the work,)
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;
I'll come to you anon.

2 *Mur.* We are resolv'd, my lord.

[14] i. e. *the exact time when you may look out or lie in wait for him.*

[15] *Always thought,*
That I require a clearness.
i. e. "Always remembering that I must stand clear of suspicion."

Macb. I'll call upon you straight; abide within.
It is concluded:——Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The same. Another Room.*

Enter LADY MACBETH, *and a* Servant.

Lady M. Is Banquo gone from court?

Serv. Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

Lady M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

Serv. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

Lady M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,
Than, by destruction, dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my lord? why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest[1] fancies your companions making?
Using those thoughts, which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy,
Should be without regard: what's done, is done.

Macb. We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it;
She'll close, and be herself; whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our place[2], have sent to peace,

[1] *Sorriest*, i. e. *most melancholy.*

[2] The first folio reads *peace;* the second folio, *place;* and there can be no doubt that the last was the word the poet intended. He would hardly have written "to *gain* our peace." Macbeth gained his *place* by the murder of Duncan, but certainly did not obtain *peace*, in any sense of the word.

Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy[3]. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestick, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further!

Lady M. Come on; gentle my lord,
Sleek o'er your rugged looks; be bright and jovial
Among your guests to-night.

Macb. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo:
Present him eminence[4], both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams;
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are[5].

Lady M. You must leave this.

Macb. O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know'st, that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

Lady M. But in them nature's copy's not eterne[6].

Macb. There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund: Ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight; ere, to black Hecate's summons,
The shard-borne beetle[7], with his drowsy hums,

[3] *Ecstasy* in its general sense signifies any violent emotion or alienation of the mind. The old dictionaries render it *a trance, a dampe, a crampe.* Vide note on the Tempest, Act iii. Sc. 3.

[4] *Present him eminence*, i. e. *do him the highest honour.*

[5] The sense of this passage appears to be:—"It is a sign that our royalty is unsafe, when it must descend to flattery, and stoop to dissimulation."

[6] Ritson has observed that "Nature's *copy*" alludes to *copyhold* tenure; in which the tenant holds an estate for *life*, having nothing but the *copy* of the rolls of his lord's court to show for it. A *life-hold* tenure may well be said to be not eternal. The subsequent speech of Macbeth, in which he says,—

"Cancel and tear to pieces *that great bond*,"

confirms this explanation. Many of Shakespeare's allusions are to legal customs.

[7] That is, *the beetle borne along the air by its shards or scaly wings.*

Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

Lady M. What's to be done?

Macb. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling[8] night,
Skarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;
And, with thy bloody and invisible hand,
Cancel, and tear to pieces, that great bond
Which keeps me pale[9]!—Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood[10]:
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse[11].

Steevens had the merit of first showing that *shard* or *sherd* was the ancient word for a *scale* or outward covering, a case or sheath: as appears from the following passage cited by him, from Gower's Confessio Amantis, b. vi. fol. 138:—

"She sigh, her thought a dragon tho,
Whose *sherdes* shynen as the sonne."

And again in book v. speaking of a serpent:—

"He was so *sherded* all about,
It held all edge tool without."

In Cymbeline Shakespeare applies this epithet again to the beetle:—

"We find
The *sharded* beetle in a safer hold
Than is the full-winged eagle."

[8] i. e. *blinding;* to *seel* up the eyes of a hawk was to close them by sewing the eyelids together.

[9] So in Cymbeline:—

"*Cancel his bond of life,* dear God, I pray."

[10] Thus in Fletcher's Faithful Shepherdess:—

"Fold your flocks up, for the air
'Gins to *thicken,* and the sun
Already his great course hath run."

Spenser in the Shepherd's Calendar has:—

"The welkin *thicks* apace."

The poet has shown himself a close observer of nature in marking the return of the rooks to their nest trees when the day is drawing to a close. Virgil has a very natural description of the same circumstance:—

"E pastu decedens agmine magno
Corvorum increpuit densis exercitus alis."

[1] See note on King Richard III. Act iv. Sc. 1. p. 484.

Thou marvell'st at my words; but hold thee still;
Things, bad begun, make strong themselves by ill:
So, pr'ythee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *The same.*

A Park or Lawn, with a Gate leading to the Palace.

Enter three Murderers.

1 *Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?
3 *Mur.* Macbeth.
2 *Mur.* He needs not our mistrust; since he delivers
Our offices, and what we have to do,
To the direction just.
1 *Mur.* Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace,
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
3 *Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.
Ban. [*Within.*] Give us a light there, ho!
2 *Mur.* Then 'tis he; the rest
That are within the note of expectation,
Already are i' the court.
1 *Mur.* His horses go about.
3 *Mur.* Almost a mile: but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Enter Banquo *and* Fleance, *with a Torch.*

2 *Mur.* A light, a light!
3 *Mur.* Tis he.
1 *Mur.* Stand to't.
Ban. It will be rain to-night.

1 *Mur.* Let it come down.

[*Assaults* BANQUO.

Ban. O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou may'st revenge. O slave!

[*Dies.* Fleance *escapes*[a].

3 *Mur.* Who did strike out the light?

1 *Mur.* Was't not the way?

3 *Mur.* There's but one down: the son is fled.

2 *Mur.* We have lost best half of our affair.

1 *Mur.* Well, let's away, and say how much is done.

SCENE IV. *A Room of State in the Palace.*

A Banquet prepared.

Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSSE, LENOX, Lords, *and* Attendants.

Macb. You know your own degrees, sit down: at first[1]
And last, the hearty welcome.

Lords. Thanks to your majesty.

Macb. Ourself will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state[2]; but, in best time,
We will require her welcome.

Lady M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks, they are welcome.

[a] *Fleance*, after the assassination of his father, fled into Wales, where, by the daughter of the prince of that country, he had a son named Walter, who afterwards became Lord High Steward of Scotland, and from thence assumed the name of Sir Walter Steward. From him, in a direct line, King James I. was descended; in compliment to whom Shakespeare has chosen to describe Banquo, who was equally concerned with Macbeth in the murder of Duncan, as innocent of that crime.

[1] *At first and last.* Johnson with great plausibility proposes to read "*To* first and last."

[2] *Keeps her state*, i. e. *continues in her chair of state.* A *state* was a royal chair with a canopy over it.

Enter first Murderer, *to the door.*

Macb. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks:——
Both sides are even: Here I'll sit i' the midst:
Be large in mirth; anon, we'll drink a measure
The table round.—There's blood upon thy face.
Mur. 'Tis Banquo's then.
Macb. 'Tis better thee without, than he within[3].
Is he despatch'd?
Mur. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.
Macb. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: Yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.
Mur. Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scap'd.
Macb. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect;
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock;
As broad, and general, as the casing air:
But now, I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?
Mur. Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched[4] gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.
Macb. Thanks for that:——
There the grown serpent lies; the worm, that's fled,
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,

[3] Mr. Hunter is of opinion that this and much of what follows Macbeth does not address to the murderer, much less speak to him, revealing the secret purpose and thoughts of his mind, and that they are aside speeches. This seems only applicable to a portion of this speech.

[4] *With twenty trenched gashes on his head.* From the French *trancher*, to cut. So in Arden of Feversham:—

"Is deeply *trenched* on my blushing brow."

No teeth for the present.—Get thee gone; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit* Murderer.
Lady M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold,
That is not often vouch'd while 'tis a making;
'Tis given with welcome: To feed were best at home;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.
Macb. Sweet remembrancer!—
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
Len. May it please your highness sit?

Enter the Ghost of BANQUO, *and sits in* MACBETH'S *place.*

Macb. Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness,
Than pity for mischance[5]!
Rosse. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please it your highness,
To grace us with your royal company?
Macb. The table's full.
Len. Here's a place reserv'd, sir.
Macb. Where?
Len. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?
Macb. Which of you have done this?
Lords. What, my good lord?
Macb. Thou canst not say, I did it: never shake

[5] Macbeth betrays himself by an overacted regard for Banquo, of whose absence from the feast he affects to complain, that he may not be suspected of knowing the cause, though at the same time he very unguardedly drops an allusion to that cause. *May I* seems to imply here a wish, not an assertion. It is during the subsequent speech of Rosse that the ghost first becomes visible to Macbeth.

Thy gory locks at me.

Rosse. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.

Lady M. Sit, worthy friends:—my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: 'pray you, keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought[6]
He will again be well: If much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion[7];
Feed, and regard him not.—Are you a man?

Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

Lady M. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger, which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws[8], and starts,
(Impostors to[9] true fear), would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoriz'd by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

Macb. Pr'ythee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?——
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.—

[6] i. e. *as speedily as thought can be exerted.* So in King Henry IV. Part I. "and *with a thought*, seven of the eleven I paid."

[7] i. e. *prolong his suffering, make his fit longer.*

[8] *Flaws* are *sudden gusts.*

[9] *Impostors to true fear.* It seems strange that none of the commentators should be aware that this was a form of *elliptic* expression, commonly used even at this day in the phrase, "this is nothing *to* them," i. e. *in comparison* to them. We have it again in Romeo and Juliet:—"My will *to* her consent is but a part," i. e. is but a part *in comparison* to her consent. Antony Huish, in his Pricianus Ephebus, 1668, says:—"The English do *eclipse* many words which the Latines would to be expressed, e. g. —There is no enemy—*to* him we foster in our bosom, i. e. *like to* or *compared to.*" Thus in the Two Gentlemen of Verona, p. 127:—"There is no woe *to* his correction." So in Fyne's Moryson's Itinerary, 1617, fol. part iii. page 5, "Thus the English proverb saith: 'No knave *to* the learned knave.'" Vide also P. Plouhman, Whitaker's edition, p. 367, l. 4.

If charnel-houses, and our graves, must send
Those that we bury, back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites[10]. [*Ghost disappears.*

Lady M. What! quite unmann'd in folly?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fye, for shame!

Macb. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere human statute purg'd the gentle weal;
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
Too terrible for the ear: the times have been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die
And there an end: but now, they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: This is more strange
Than such a murder is.

Lady M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forget:—
Do not muse[11] at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I'll sit down:—Give me some wine, fill full:—
I drink to the general joy of the whole table,

Enter Ghost.

And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
'Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all[12].

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

[10] The same thought occurs in Spenser's Faerie Queene, b. ii. c. viii.—"Be not entombed in the raven or the *kight*."

[11] Shakespeare uses to *muse* for to *wonder*, to be in *amaze*. So in King Henry IV. Part II. Act iv.—

"I *muse*, you make so slight a question."

and in All's Well that Ends Well:—

"And rather *muse* than ask why I entreat you."

[12] That is, *we desire to drink all good wishes to all.*

Macb. Avaunt! and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation[13] in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!
Lady M. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.
Macb. What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger[14],
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: Or, be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword:
If trembling I inhabit[15] then, protest me
The baby of a girl.—Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence!—[*Ghost disappears.*] Why, so;—being gone,
I am a man again.—'Pray you, sit still.
Lady M. You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admir'd disorder.
Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome[16] us like a summer's cloud,

[13] *Thou hast no speculation in those eyes.* Bullokar in his Expositor, 1616, explains "*Speculation*, the inward knowledge, or *beholding* of a thing." Thus in the 115th Psalm:—"Eyes have they, but see not."

[14] *Hyrcan* for *Hyrcanian* was the mode of expression at that time.

[15] Pope changed *inhabit*, the reading of the old copy, to *inhibit*. To *inhibit* is to *forbid*, a meaning which will not suit with the context of the passage. The original text is sufficiently plain. "Dare me to the desert with thy sword; if then I do not meet thee there; if trembling I then stay in my castle, or any *habitation*; if I hide my head, or *dwell* in any place through fear, protest me the baby of a girl."

[16] *Overcome us*, i. e. *pass over us without wonder, as a casual summer's cloud passes, unregarded.*

Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe[17],
When now I think, you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine are blanch'd with fear.

Rosse. What sights, my lord?

Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him: at once, good night:—
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

Len. Good night, and better health
Attend his majesty!

Lady M. A kind good night to all!

[*Exeunt* Lords *and* Attendants.

Macb. It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood;
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augures[18], and understood relations, have,
By magot-pies, and choughs, and rooks, brought forth
The secret'st man of blood.—What is the night?

Lady M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

Macb. How say'st thou[19], that Macduff denies his person,

[17] *Owe*, i. e. *possess.* "You strike me with amazement, make me scarce know myself, now when I think that you can behold such sights unmoved, &c."

[18] i. e. *auguries, divinations;* formerly spelt *augures*, as appears by Florio in voce *augurio.* By *understood relations*, probably, connected circumstances *relating* to the crime are meant. In all the modern editions we have it erroneously *augurs. Magot-pie* is the original name of the *magpie:* stories, such as Shakespeare alludes to, are to be found in Lupton's Thousand Notable Things, and in Goulart's Admirable Histories.

[19] i. e. *what say'st thou to this circumstance?* Thus in Macbeth's address to his wife on the first appearance of Banquo's ghost:—

"Behold! look! lo! *how say you?*"

At our great bidding?

Lady M. Did you send to him, sir?

Macb. I hear it by the way; but I will send:
There's not a one of them, but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow
(And betimes I will,) to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst: for mine own good
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stept in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;
Which must be acted, ere they may be scann'd.

Lady M. You lack the season[20] of all natures, sleep.

Macb. Come, we'll to sleep: My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:—
We are yet but young in deed[21]. [*Exeunt.*

So again in Othello, when the Duke is informed that the Turkish fleet was making for Rhodes, which he supposed to have been bound for Cyprus, he says:—

"*How say you* by this change?"

Again in the Two Gentlemen of Verona, Speed says, "But Launce, *how say'st thou*, that my master is become a notable lover?"

[20] *You lack the season of all natures, sleep.* Johnson explains this, "*You want sleep*, which *seasons* or gives the relish to *all natures*." Indiget somni vitæ condimenti. So in All's Well that Ends Well:—

"'Tis the best brine a maiden can *season* her praise in."

See note on Hamlet, Act i. Sc. 3.

[21] The editions previous to Theobald's read:—

"We're but young *indeed*."

The *initiate fear* is "the fear that always attends the first initiation into guilt, before the mind becomes callous and insensible by *hard use* or frequent repetition of it."

SCENE V. *The Heath. Thunder.*

Enter HECATE[1], *meeting the three* Witches.

1 *Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate? you look angerly.

Hec. Have I not reason, beldams, as you are,
Saucy, and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffick with Macbeth,
In riddles, and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful, and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: Get you gone,

Shakespeare has been unjustly censured for introducing Hecate among the vulgar witches, and consequently for confounding ancient with modern superstitions. But the poet has elsewhere shown himself well acquainted with the classical connexion which this deity had with witchcraft. Reginald Scot, in his Discovery, mentions it as the common opinion of all writers, that witches were supposed to have nightly "meetings with Herodias and the Pagan gods," and that "in the night time they ride abroad with *Diana*, the goddess of the Pagans," &c. Their dame or chief leader seems always to have been an old Pagan, as "the Ladie Sibylla, Minerva, or Diana." In Middleton's Witch, Hecate is the name of one of his witches, and she has a son a low buffoon. In Jonson's Sad Sheperd, Act ii. Sc. 3, Maudlin the witch calls *Hecate* the mistress of witches, "Our dame *Hecate*." Shakespeare no doubt knew that *Diana* was the name by which the goddess was invoked in modern times, but has preferred her former appellation. Our great poet is not alone in the pronunciation of *Hecate* as a dissyllable. Marlowe, who was a scholar, has also thus used it in his Dr. Faustus:—

"Pluto's blew fire and *Hecat's* tree
With magick spells encompass thee."

Jonson also, in the passage above cited, and even Milton, in his Comus, have taken the same liberty:—

"Stay thy cloudy ebon chair
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat, and befriend us," &c.

And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' the morning; thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels, and your spells, provide,
Your charms, and every thing beside;
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end.
Great business must be wrought ere noon.
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound[2];
I'll catch it ere it come to ground;
And that, distill'd by magick slights[3],
Shall raise such artificial sprights,
As, by the strength of their illusion,
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:
And you all know, security
Is mortal's chiefest enemy.

SONG. [*Within.*] *Come away, come away, &c.*[4]

[2] Steevens remarks that Shakespeare's mythological knowledge on this occasion appears to have deserted him; for as *Hecate* is only one of three names belonging to the same goddess, she could not properly be employed in one character to catch a drop that fell from her in another. In a Midsummer Night's Dream, however, the poet was sufficiently aware of her threefold capacity:— "Fairies, that do run
By the *triple* Hecat's team."
The *vaporous drop profound* seems to have been meant for the same as the *virus lunare* of the ancients, being a foam which the moon was supposed to shed on particular herbs, or other objects, when strongly solicited by enchantment. Lucan introduces Erictho using it, lib. vi.—"Et virus large *lunare* ministrat."

[3] *Slights* are *arts, subtle practices.*

[4] This song is to be found in The Witch, by Middleton: for the convenience of the reader it is subjoined:—

"Come away, come away,
Hecate, Hecate, come away, } *In the air.*
Hec. I come, I come, I come,
With all the speed I may,
With all the speed I may."

Hark, I am call'd; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [*Exit.*

1 *Witch.* Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. Fores. *A Room in the Palace.*

Enter LENOX *and another* Lord.

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne: The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth:—marry, he was dead:—
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;
Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.
Who cannot[1] want the thought, how monstrous
It was for Malcolm, and for Donalbain,
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight,
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink, and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive,
To hear the men deny it. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think,
That, had he Duncan's sons under his key,
(As, an't please heaven, he shall not), they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace! for from broad words, and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,
Macduff lives in disgrace: Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?

[1] *Who cannot want the thought*, &c. The sense requires "who *can* want the thought;" but it is, probably, a lapse of the poet's pen.

Lord. The son[a] of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court; and is receiv'd
Of the most pious Edward with such grace,
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect: Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid
To wake Northumberland, and warlike Siward:
That, by the help of these, (with Him above
To ratify the work,) we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights;
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives[2];
Do faithful homage, and receive free honours[3];—
All which we pine for now: And this report
Hath so exasperate[4] the king, that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Len. Sent he to Macduff!

Lord. He did: and with an absolute, *Sir, not I,*
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say, *You'll rue the time*
That clogs me with this answer.

Len. And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message ere he come; that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accurs'd!

Lord. I'll send my prayers with him!

[*Exeunt.*

[a] The folio misprints *sonnes'*.

[2] *Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives.* The construction is, *free our feasts and banquets from bloody knives.*

[3] I have shown in a note on Twelfth Night, Act ii. Sc. 4, p. 322, that *free* meant *pure, chaste,* consequently *unspotted,* which may be its meaning here. *Free* also meant *liberal, noble.* See note on the Second Part of King Henry VI. Act iii. Sc. 1.

[4] *Exasperate* for *exasperated.* The old copies have *their* king

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A dark Cave. In the middle, a Cauldron boiling.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches[1].

1 *Witch.*

THRICE the brinded cat hath mew'd.

2 *Witch.* Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whin'd[2].

3 *Witch.* Harper cries[3]:—'Tis time, 'tis time.

1 *Witch.* Round about the cauldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone[3],
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd[4] venom, sleeping got,

[1] *Enter the three Witches.* Dr. Johnson has called the reader's attention to the "judgment with which Shakespeare has selected all the circumstances of his infernal ceremonies, and how exactly he has conformed to common opinions and traditions."

[2] *Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whin'd.* The urchin or hedgehog, like the toad, for its solitariness, the ugliness of its appearance, and from a popular belief that it sucked or poisoned the udders of cows, was adopted into the demonologic system; and its shape was sometimes supposed to be assumed by mischievous elves. Hence it was one of the plagues of Caliban in The Tempest.

[3] In the old copy it is *Harpier*, most probably intended for *Harpie*. But in Marlowe's Tamburlane we have—

"And like a *harper* tires upon my life."

[3] Pope printed, "*the* cold stone;" Steevens, "*coldest* stone." I follow the old copy. See Boswell's Essay on Shakespeare's Versification. In the next line it is usual to print *hast* instead of *has*, which is the old reading; but the speaker is not addressing the toad, she is giving instructions for the charm.

[4] *Swelter'd.* This word is employed to signify that the animal was moistened with its own cold exudations. In the Philosophical Transactions for 1826, Dr. Davy has shown that the toad is poisonous, the poison lying diffused over the body immediately under the skin.

Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!
All. Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn; and cauldron bubble.
2 *Witch.* Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake:
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's[5] sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing,
For a charm of pow'rful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
All. Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn; and cauldron bubble.
3 *Witch.* Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf;
Witches mummy; maw and gulf[6]
Of the ravin'd[7] salt-sea shark;
Root of hemlock, digg'd i' the dark;
Liver of blaspheming Jew;
Gall of goat; and slips of yew
Sliver'd[8] in the moon's eclipse;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips;
Finger of birth-strangled babe,
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chauldron[9],

[5] The *blind-worm* is the *slow-worm.* Thus in Drayton's Noah's Flood:—

"The small eyed *slow-worm* held of many *blind.*"

[6] *Gulf*, i. e. *the throat.*

[7] To *ravin*, according to Minsheu, is to *devour*, to *eat greedily.* Shakespeare probably used *ravin'd* for *ravenous*, the passive participle for the adjective. In Horman's Vulgaria, 1519, occurs "Thou art a *ravenar* of delycatis."

[8] *Sliver* is a common word in the north, where it means *to cut a piece* or *slice.* Again in King Lear:—

"She who herself will *sliver* and disbranch."

[9] i. e. *entrails;* a word formerly in common use in books of cookery, in one of which, printed in 1597, is a receipt to make a pudding of a calf's *chaldron.*

For the ingredients of our cauldron.

All. Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire burn; and cauldron bubble.

2 *Witch.* Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

Enter HECATE, *and the other three* Witches.

Hec. O, well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains.
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

Musick and a SONG. *Black Spirits, &c.*[10]

2 *Witch.* By the pricking of my thumbs[11],
Something wicked this way comes:—
Open, locks, whoever knocks.

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags?
What is't you do?

All. A deed without a name.

Macb. I cónjure you, by that which you profess,

[10] This song is found in The Witch, by Middleton, and is there called "A charme Song about a Vessel."

"*Black spirits and white,*
Red spirits and gray;
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You that mingle may.
Titty Tiffin, keep it stiff in,
Firedrake, Puckey, make it lucky,
Liard, Robin, you must bobin,
Round, around, around, about, about,
All ill come running in, all good keep out."

[11] *By the pricking of my thumbs.* It is a very ancient superstition, that all sudden pains of the body, and other sensations which could not naturally be accounted for, were presages of somewhat that was shortly to happen.

(Howe'er you come to know it), answer me:
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty[12] waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed[13] corn be lodg'd, and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of nature's germins[14] tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me
To what I ask you.

1 *Witch.* Speak.

2 *Witch.* Demand.

3 *Witch.* We'll answer

1 *Witch.* Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters'?

Macb. Call 'em, let me see 'em.

1 *Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow[15]; grease, that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet, throw
Into the flame.

All. Come, high or low;
Thyself, and office, deftly[16] show.

[12] *Yesty* is nere from the A. S. yꝛtiȝ, Ieꝛtiȝ, procellosus, *stormy*, which much better accords with the poet's high charged description. *Yest* is from the same A. S. verb.

[13] *Bladed corn* is *corn just come into ear*, when it is very liable to be *lodged* by winds and storms. See The Text of Shakespeare Vindicated, p. 255.

[14] *Germins*, i. e. *seeds which have begun to sprout* or *germinate*.

[15] *Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten*
Her nine farrow.
Shakespeare probably caught this idea from the laws of Kenneth II. King of Scotland:—"If a sow *eate hir pigges*, let hyr be stoned to death and buried, that no man eate of hyr flesh."—*Holinshed's History of Scotland, ed.* 1577, p. 181.

[16] *Deftly* is *adroitly, dexterously.*

Thunder. 1 Apparition, *of an armed Head*[17].

Macb. Tell me, thou unknown power,——

1 *Witch.* He knows thy thought;
Hear his speech, but say thou nought[18].

App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware
Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife.—Dismiss me:—Enough[19].
[*Descends.*

Macb. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: — But one word more:—

1 *Witch.* He will not be commanded: Here's another,
More potent than the first.

Thunder. 2 Apparition, *of a bloody Child.*

App. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

Macb. Had I three ears, I'd hear thee[20].

App. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn

[17] "The armed head represents symbolically Macbeth's head cut off and brought to Malcolm by Macduff. The bloody child is Macduff, untimely ripped from his mother's womb. The child, with a crown on his head and a bough in his hand, is the royal Malcolm, who ordered his soldiers to hew them down a bough, and bear it before them to Dunsinane."—*Upton.*

[18] Silence was necessary during all incantations. So in Dr. Faustus:—

"Your grace demand no questions,
But in dumb *silence* let them come and go."

And in The Tempest:—

"Be *mute*, or else our spell is marr'd."

[19] Spirits thus evoked were supposed to be impatient of being questioned. The spirit in the Second Part of King Henry the VIth, Act iv. Sc. 1, says:—

"Ask what thou wilt:—That I had said and done."

[20] *Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.* This singular expression probably means no more than, *I will listen to thee with all attention.*

The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth[21]. [*Descends.*

Macb. Then live, Macduff; What need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear, it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.—

Thunder. 3 Apparition, *of a Child crowned, with a Tree in his Hand.*

What is this,
That rises like the issue of a king;
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty[22]?

All. Listen, but speak not to't.

App. Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are;
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill[23]

[21] *For none of woman born shall harm Macbeth.* So Holinshed:—"And surely hereupon he had put Macduff to death, but that a certeine witch, whom he had in great trust, had told him, that he should never be slaine with man borne of anie woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castle of Dunsinane. This prophecy put all fear out of his heart."

[22] The *round* is that part of a crown which encircles the head: the *top* is the ornament which rises above it.

[23] The present accent of *Dunsinane* is right. In every subsequent instance the accent is misplaced. Thus in Hervey's Life of King Robert Bruce 1729, which Ritson thinks a good authority:—

"Whose deeds let Birnam and *Dunsinnan* tell,
When Canmore battled and the villain fell."

Andrew of Wyntoun uses both accents.

Prophecies of apparent impossibilities were common in Scotland; such as the removal of one place to another, &c. Thus Sir D. Lindsay:—

"Quhen the Bas and the Isle of May
Beis set upon the Mount Sinay,

Shall come against him. [*Descends.*

Macb. That will never be;
Who can impress the forest[24]; bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head[25], rise never, till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-plac'd Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time, and mortal custom.—Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing; Tell me, (if your art
Can tell so much,) shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macb. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know:—
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise[26] is this?
[*Hautboys.*

1 *Witch.* Show! 2 *Witch.* Show! 3 *Witch.* Show!

All. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart[27];
Come like shadows, so depart.

A show of Eight Kings, *and* BANQUO *last, with a Glass in his Hand.*

Macb. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!

Quhen the Lowmound beside Falkland
Be liftit to Northumberland."

[24] i. e. *command it to serve him like a soldier impressed.*

[25] The old copy has *Rebellious dead.* Theobald changed *dead* to *head;* but this was only a partial cure of the corruption: it is quite evident that we should read *Rebellion's head,* the *conspirers* mentioned by the apparition. "Let Rebellion never raise its head till the wood of Birnam rise, and Macbeth shall live the lease of nature." The personification adds much to the effect of the passage.

[26] *Noise* in our old poets is often literally synonymous for *music.* Vide a note on the Second Part of King Henry IV. Act ii. Sc. 4.

[27] *Show his eyes, and grieve his heart.* "And the man of thine,

Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs :—And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first :—
A third is like the former :—Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this?—A fourth?—Start, eyes!
What! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom[28]?
Another yet?—A seventh?—I'll see no more :—
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass[29],
Which shows me many more; and some I see,
That twofold balls and treble sceptres carry[30]:
Horrible sight!—Now, I see, 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd[31] Banquo smiles upon me,

whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to *consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart.*"—1 *Samuel* ii. 33.

[28] i. e. *the dissolution of nature.* *Crack* and *crash* were formerly synonymous.

[29] This method of juggling prophecy is referred to in Measure for Measure, Act ii. Sc. 8 :—

" And like a prophet
Looks in a *glass*, and shows me *future evils.*"

In an extract from the Penal Laws against witches, it is said "they do answer either by voice, or else set before their eyes in *glasses*, chrystal stones, &c. the pictures or images of the persons or things sought for." Spenser has given a circumstantial account of the *glass* which Merlin made for King Ryence.—*Faerie Queene*, b. iii. c. 2. A mirror of the same kind was presented to Cambuscan, in the Squire's Tale of Chaucer: and we are told that " a certaine philosopher did the like to Pompey, the which *shewed him in a glasse* the order of his enemies march."—*Boisteau's Theatrum Mundi, translated by John Alday, b. l. no date.*

[30] *That twofold balls and treble sceptres carry.* This was intended as a compliment to James the First: he first united the two islands and the three kingdoms under one head, whose house too was said to be descended from Banquo, who is therefore represented not only as innocent, but as a noble character; whereas, according to history, he was confederate with Macbeth in the murder of Duncan.

[31] " In Warwickshire," says Malone, " when a horse, sheep, or other animal, perspires much, and any of the hair or wool, in consequence of such perspiration, or any redundant humour, becomes matted into tufts with grime and sweat, he is said to be *boltered*; and whenever the blood issues out and coagulates, forming the locks into hard clotted bunches, the beast is said to be *blood-boltered.* When a boy has a broken head, so that his hair is

And points at them for his.—What! is this so?

1 *Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so:—But why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?—
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprights[32],
And show the best of our delights;
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antick round:
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Musick. The* Witches *dance, and vanish.*

Macb. Where are they? Gone?—Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!—
Come in, without there!

Enter LENOX.

Len. What's your grace's will?

Macb. Saw you the weird sisters?

Len. No, my lord.

Macb. Came they not by you?

Len. No, indeed, my lord.

Macb. Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd all those that trust them!—I did hear
The galloping of horse: Who was't came by?

Len. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word,
Macduff is fled to England.

Macb. Fled to England?

Len. Ay, my good lord.

Macb. Time, thou anticipat'st[33] my dread exploits:

matted together with blood, his head is said to be *boltered* [pronounced *baltered.*]" It is therefore applicable to Banquo, who had "twenty trenched gashes on his head."

[32] *Sprights*, i. e. *spirits.* It would seem that *spirits* was almost always pronounced *sprights* or *sprites* by Shakespeare's cotemporaries.

[33] *Anticipat'st*, i. e. *preventest them, by taking away the opportunity.*

The flighty purpose never is o'ertook,
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment,
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o'the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool:
This deed I'll do, before this purpose cool:
But no more flights[34]!—Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Fife. *A Room in* Macduff's *Castle.*

Enter LADY MACDUFF, *her* Son, *and* ROSSE.

L. Macd. What had he done, to make him fly the land?

Rosse. You must have patience, madam.

L. Macd. He had none;
His flight was madness: When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors[1].

Rosse. You know not,
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

L. Macd. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch: for the poor wren,

[34] The old copies have *sights.* It has been altered to *flights* in Mr. Collier's second folio, and in that which I possess; but some have doubted whether by *sights* Macbeth is not intended to refer to such as the Witches had shown him.

[1] *Our fears do make us traitors,* i. e. *our flight is considered as evidence of our treason.*

The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

Rosse. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: But, for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' th' season[2]. I dare not speak much further:
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves[a]; when we hold rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear[3];
But float upon a wild and violent sea,
Each way, and move.—I take my leave of you:
'Tshall not be long[b] but I'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.—My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

L. Macd. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Rosse. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace, and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit* ROSSE.

L. Macd. Sirrah[4], your father's dead;

[2] *The fits o' the season* would appear to be the *violent disorders* of the season, its convulsions: as we still say figuratively *the temper of the times.* So in Coriolanus:—

"But that
The *violent fit* o' th' times craves it as physic."

[a] Hanmer reads, "and do not *know't* ourselves," and I incline to think he was right.

[3] "The times are cruel when we are led by our fears to believe every rumour of danger we hear, yet are not conscious to ourselves of any crime for which we should be disturbed with fears." A passage like this occurs in King John:—

"Possess'd with *rumours*, full of idle dreams,
Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear."

[b] The old copy has, "Shall not be long;" the ellipsis *'t*, for *it*, having evidently been omitted by accident.

[4] *Sirrah* was not in our author's time a term of reproach, but sometimes used by masters to servants, parents to children, &c.

And what will you do now? How will you live?

Son. As birds do, mother.

L. Macd. What, with worms and flies?

Son. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

L. Macd. Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net, nor lime,
The pit-fall, nor the gin.

Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

L. Macd. Yes, he is dead; how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?

L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit;
And yet i'faith, with wit enough for thee.

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?

L. Macd. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor?

L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors, that do so?

L. Macd. Every one that does so, is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged, that swear and lie?

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them?

L Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools: for there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men, and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

Son. If he were dead, you'd weep for him: if you

would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler! how thou talk'st.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honour I am perfect[5].
I doubt, some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you, were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!
I dare abide no longer. [*Exit* Messenger.

L. Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I'm in this earthly world; where, to do harm,
Is often laudable; to do good, sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: Why then, alas!
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say, I have done no harm? ——
What are these faces?

Enter Murderers.

Mur. Where is your husband?

L. Macd. I hope, in no place so unsanctified,
Where such as thou may'st find him.

Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd[6] villain.

Mur. What, you egg! [*Stabbing him.*

[5] i. e. *I am perfectly acquainted with your rank.*

[6] The old copies have "shag-ear'd villain." *Shag-hair'd* is an abusive epithet frequent in our old plays. *Hair* being formerly spelt *heare*, the corruption would easily arise. In Lodge's Incarnate Devils of this Age, 1596, 4to. p. 37, we have it thus: "*shag-heard slave.*"

Young fry of treachery!

Son. He has kill'd me, mother;
Run away, I pray you. [*Dies.*

[*Exit* LADY MACDUFF, *crying murder, and pursued by the* Murderers.

SCENE III. England. *A Room in the King's Palace.*

Enter MALCOLM *and* MACDUFF[1].

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword; and, like good men,
Bestride our downfall'n birthdom[2]: Each new morn,
New widows howl; new orphans cry; new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

Mal. What I believe, I'll wail;
What know, believe; and, what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend[3], I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so, perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have lov'd him well;

[1] This scene is almost literally taken from Holinshed's Chronicle, which is in this part an abridgment of the chronicle of Hector Boece, as translated by John Bellenden. From the recent reprints of both the Scottish and English chroniclers, quotations from them become the less necessary; they are now accessible to the reader curious in tracing the poet to his sources of information.

[2] *Birthdom*, for the place of our birth, our native land. Thus in the Second Part of King Henry IV. Morton says—

"He doth *bestride a bleeding land*."

The old copies have *downfall*.

[3] *The time to friend*, i. e. *befriend*.

He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve[4] of him through me; and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb,
To appease an angry god.

Macd. I am not treacherous.

Mal. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil,
In an imperial charge[5]. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so[6].

Macd. I have lost my hopes.

Mal. Perchance, even there, where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
(Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,)
Without leave taking?—I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonours,
But mine own safeties: You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

Macd. Bleed, bleed, poor country!

[4] *You may deserve of him through me.* The old copy reads *discerne.* The emendation was made by Theobald. In the subsequent part of the line something is wanted to complete the sense. There is no verb to which *wisdom* can refer. Perhaps we should read:—

" But something
You may deserve of him through me; and wisdom
'Twere to offer," &c.

[5] *A good and virtuous nature may recoil*
In an imperial charge.

i. e. A good mind may recede from goodness in the execution of a royal commission.

[6] *Yet grace must still look so,* i. e. *must still look as it does.* An expression of a similar nature occurs in Measure for Measure:—

" Good alone
Is good; without a name vileness is so."

Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dares not check thee!—wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeer'd[7]!—Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

Mal. Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think, withal,
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here, from gracious England, have I offer
Of goodly thousands: But, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before;
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

Macd. What should he be?

Mal. It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted,
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow; and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
With my confineless harms[8].

Macd. Not in the legions

[7] To *affeer* is a law term, signifying to *assess* or *reduce to certainty*. The meaning therefore may be, *the title is confirmed*. My interpretation of the passage is this: "Bleed, bleed, poor country! Great Tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure, for goodness dares not check thee! Wear thou the honours achieved by thy wrongs; the title to them is now confirmed."

[8] *Confineless harms*, i. e. *immeasurable evils*. Thus in the Merry Wives of Windsor, Act ii. Sc. 2, we have—

"Thou *unconfinable baseness*."

Of horrid hell, can come a devil more damn'd
In evils, to top Macbeth.
Mal. I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: But there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust; and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear,
That did oppose my will: Better Macbeth,
Than such a one to reign.
Macd. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Enjoy[9] your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hood-wink.
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclin'd.
Mal. With this, there grows,
In my most ill-compos'd affection, such
A staunchless avarice, that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands;
Desire his jewels, and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good, and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.
Macd. This avarice
Sticks deeper; grows with more pernicious root

[9] The old copy has *convey*. The words were easily confounded in copying from old MS.

Than summer-seeming lust[10]; and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: Yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foysons[11] to fill up your will,
Of your mere own: All these are portable[12],
With other graces weigh'd.

Mal. But I have none: The king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perséverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them; but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

Macd. O Scotland! Scotland!

Mal. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.

Macd. Fit to govern!
No, not to live.—O nation miserable,
With an untitled[13] tyrant bloody-sceptred,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again?
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accurs'd,
And does blaspheme his breed?—Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king; the queen, that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,

[10] *Summer-seeming lust*, i. e. *summer-resembling lust*, blazing hot for a while, but then passing away. Avarice is not so transient, as it increases with age. In Donne's Poems Malone has pointed out its opposite—*winter-seeming*.

[11] *Foysons*, i. e. *plenty*.

[12] *Portable* answers exactly to a phrase now in use. Such failings may be *borne with*, or are *bearable*.

[13] *With an untitled tyrant*. Thus in Chaucer's Manciple's Tale:—

> "Right so betwix a *titleles tiraunt*
> And an outlawe."

Died every day she liv'd[14]. Fare thee well!
These evils, thou repeat'st upon thyself,
Have banish'd me from Scotland.—O, my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

Mal. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wip'd the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power; and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: But God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction: here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman; never was forsworn;
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own;
At no time broke my faith; would not betray
The devil to his fellow; and delight
No less in truth, than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself: What I am truly,
Is thine, and my poor country's, to command:
Whither, indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
Already at a point[a], was setting forth:
Now we'll together; And the chance, of goodness,
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

Macd. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once,
'Tis hard to reconcile.

[14] *Died every day she lived.* The expression is derived from the Sacred Writings:—"I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, *I die daily*."—1 *Cor.* xv. 31.

[a] *At a point*, i. e. *at a stay or stop, settled, determined.* The Rev. Mr. Arrowsmith has fully exemplified this phrase in Notes and Queries, vol. 7, p. 521.

Enter a Doctor.

Mal. Well; more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray you?

Doct. Ay, sir: there are a crew of wretched souls,
That stay his cure: their malady convinces[15]
The great assay of art; but, at his touch,
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

Mal. I thank you, doctor.

[*Exit* Doctor.

Macd. What's the disease he means?

Mal. 'Tis call'd the evil:
A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures;
Hanging a golden stamp[16] about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy;
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
That speak him full of grace.

Enter Rosse.

Macd. See, who comes here?

Mal. My countryman; but yet I know him not.

Macd. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

Mal. I know him now: Good God, betimes remove

[15] *Convinces*, i. e. *overcomes it.* We have before seen this word used in the same Latin sense, at p. 33, Act i. Sc. 7, of this play. "To *convince* or convicte, to vanquish and overcome. *Evinco.*"—Baret.

[16] *A golden stamp*, i. e. *the coin called an angel*; the value of which was ten shillings. The allusion to touching for the evil is a compliment to James, by whom it was practised.

The mean that makes[a] us strangers!
Rosse. Sir, Amen.
Macd. Stands Scotland where it did?
Rosse. Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave: where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rent[17] the air,
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy[18]; the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd, for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying, or ere they sicken.
Macd. O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!
Mal. What's the new'st grief?
Rosse. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.
Macd. How does my wife?
Rosse. Why, well.
Macd. And all my children?
Rosse. Well too[19].

[a] In the first folio this is printed "the *meanes* that *makes* us strangers." There is no doubt, however, that the poet wrote, with his cotemporaries, "the *meane*," in its old singular form, from the French *moyen*. The words are repeated in the second folio.

[17] "To *rent* is an ancient verb, which has been long disused," say the editors. Mr. Knight properly preserves the archaism; Mr. Collier abandons it. Here is an example of its use by a contemporary of the poet:—

> "Make known, why such an instrument
> As Weston, a poore serving-man, should *rent*
> The frame of this sad-good man's life."
>
> *W. S. on the Death of Overbury*, 1616.

[18] It has been before observed that Shakespeare uses *ecstasy* for every species of alienation of mind, whether proceeding from sorrow, joy, wonder, or any other exciting cause. *Modern* is generally used by him in the sense of *common, trite*. *A modern ecstasy* is therefore *a common grief*. Vide Act iii. Sc. 2, p. 60, note 3.

[19] Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—

Macd. The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

Rosse. No; they were well at peace, when I did leave them.

Macd. Be not a niggard of your speech; How goes it?

Rosse. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help! your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

Mal. Be it their comfort,
We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward, and ten thousand men;
An older, and a better soldier, none
That Christendom gives out.

Rosse. 'Would, I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words,
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch[20] them.

Macd. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief[21],
Due to some single breast?

Rosse. No mind, that's honest,
But in it shares some woe; though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

" We use
To say, *the dead are well.*"

[20] To *latch* (in the North) signifies the same as to *catch.* Thus also Golding, in his translation of the first book of Ovid's Metamorphoses:—

" As though he would, at everie stride, betweene his teeth hir *latch.*"

[21] *Or is it a fee-grief*, i. e. *a peculiar sorrow, a grief that hath but a single owner.* So in a Lover's Complaint:—

" My woeful self that did in freedom stand,
And was my own *fee-simple.*"

Macd. If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.
Rosse. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
Macd. Humph! I guess at it.
Rosse. Your castle is surpris'd; your wife, and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry[22] of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.
Mal. Merciful heaven!—
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief, that does not speak,
Whispers the o'erfraught heart, and bids it break[23].
Macd. My children too?
Rosse. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.
Macd. And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?
Rosse. I have said.
Mal. Be comforted:
Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
Macd. He has no children[a].—All my pretty ones?

[22] *Quarry*, the game after it is killed: it is a term used both in hunting and falconry. The old English term *querre* is used for the *square* spot wherein the dead game was deposited. *Quarry* is also used for the game pursued. See Act i. Sc. 2, note 5.

[23] In Montaigne's Essays by Florio, with which Shakespeare was familiar, we have:—"All passions that may be tasted and digested are but mean and slight."

"*Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.*"
"Light cares can freely speake,
Great cares heart rather breake."

And in Vittoria Corombona:—

"Those are killing griefs which dare not speak."

We have similar passages in Greene's Tragical History of Faire Bellora; and Daniel's Complaint of Rosamond.

[a] It is most probable that this refers to Malcolm, and that

Did you say, all?—O, hell-kite!—All?
What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam,
At one fell swoop[24]?

Mal. Dispute it like a man.

Macd. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.—Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls; Heaven rest them now!

Mal. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

Macd. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue!—But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission: front to front,
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland, and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too[25]!

Mal. This tune[26] goes manly.
Come, go we to the king: our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave: Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may;
The night is long that never finds the day. [*Exeunt.*

Macduff, rejecting his proffered comfort, turns to Rosse and says, "*He*, i. e. Malcolm, has no children—I cannot quit the subject, tell me more."

[24] *At one fell swoop.* *Swoop*, from the verb *to swoop* or *sweep*, is *the descent of a bird of prey on his quarry.* So in the White Devil, 1612:—

"That she may take away all at one *swoop.*"

[25] Mason has pointed out a similar thought in The Chances of Beaumont and Fletcher:—"He scap'd me yesternight which if he do again adventure for, Heaven pardon him: I shall with all my heart."

[26] The old copy reads *time.* The alteration is Rowe's, but was perhaps unnecessary, as *tune* and *time* were formerly synonymous.

ACT V.

SCENE I. Dunsinane. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter a Doctor *of Physick, and a waiting* Gentlewoman.

Doctor.

I HAVE two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

Gent. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doct. A great perturbation in nature! to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching.—In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking, and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gent. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doct. You may, to me; and 'tis most meet you should.

Gent. Neither to you, nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a Taper.*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

Doct. How came she by that light?

Gent. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

Doct. You see her eyes are open.

Gent. Ay, but their sense is shut[1].

Doct. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gent. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands; I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady M. Yet here's a spot.

Doct. Hark, she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady M. Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One: Two: Why, then 'tis time to do't:——Hell is murky[2]! —Fye, my lord, fye! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Doct. Do you mark that?

Lady M. The thane of Fife had a wife: Where is she now?——What, will these hands ne'er be clean? —No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doct. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gent. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: Heaven knows what she has known.

[1] *Ay, but their sense is shut.* The old copy reads, "Ay, but their sense *are* shut." Malone has quoted other instances of the same inaccurate grammar, according to modern notions, from Julius Cæsar:—

"The posture of his blows *are* yet unknown."

And from the hundred and twelfth Sonnet of Shakespeare:—

"In so profound abysm I throw all care
Of others' voices, that my adder's *sense*
To critick and to flatterer stopped *are*."

Vide note on Hamlet, Act i. Sc. 1.

[2] *Hell is murky.* Lady Macbeth, in her dream, imagines herself talking to her husband, who, she supposes, had just said *Hell is murky*, i. e. *hell is a dismal place to go to in consequence of such a deed*, and repeats his words in contempt of his cowardice. —"Hell is murky!—Fye, my lord, fye! a soldier, and afeard?" This explanation is by Steevens, and appears to me very judicious.

Lady M. Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand[3]. Oh! oh! oh!

Doct. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

Gent. I would not have such a heart in my bosom, for the dignity of the whole body.

Doct. Well, well, well.

Gent. 'Pray God, it be, sir.

Doct. This disease is beyond my practice: Yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep, who have died holily in their beds.

Lady M. Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale:—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

Doct. Even so.

Lady M. To bed, to bed; there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand; What's done, cannot be undone: To bed, to bed, to bed. [*Exit* LADY MACBETH.

Doct. Will she go now to bed?

Gent. Directly.

[3] Mrs. Siddons, whose personation of Lady Macbeth will not easily be equalled, remarks, "How beautifully contrasted is the exclamation 'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand,' with the bolder image of Macbeth in expressing the same feeling: 'Will all great Neptune's ocean wash the blood clean from this hand?' And how appropriately either sex illustrates the same idea!" Fuseli observes that "Taste and smell, as sources of tragic emotion, in consequence of their power commanding gesture, seem scarcely admissible in art or on the theatre, because their extremes are more nearly allied to disgust, and loathsome or risible ideas, than to terror. The prophetic trance of Cassandra, who scents the prepared murder of Agamemnon at the threshold of the ominous hall, the desperate moan of Macbeth's queen, on seeing the visionary spot still uneffaced on her hand, are images snatched from the lap of terrors—but soon would cease to be so, were the artist or the actress to enforce the dreadful hint with indiscreet expression or gesture."

Doct. Foul whisp'rings are abroad: Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: Infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
More needs she the divine, than the physician.—
God, God, forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her:—So, good night:
My mind she has mated[4], and amaz'd my sight:
I think, but dare not speak.

Gent. Good night, good doctor.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *The Country near* Dunsinane.

Enter with Drum and Colours, Menteth, Cathness, Angus, Lenox, *and* Soldiers.

Ment. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward[1], and the good Macduff.
Revenges burn in them: for their dear causes
Would, to the bleeding, and the grim alarm,
Excite the mortified man[2].

Ang. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

Cath. Who knows, if Donalbain be with his brother?

[4] *My mind she has mated.* *Mated*, or *amated*, from *matté*, old French, signified to *overcome, confound, dismay*, or *make afraid.* The word is said to be obsolete in Phillips's World of Words, 1670. See Vol. vi. p. 181, note 16.

[1] "Duncan had two sons by his wife, who was the daughter of *Siward, Earl of Northumberland.*"—*Holinshed.*

[2] By *the mortified man* is meant a *religious man*; one who has mortified his passions, is dead to the world, has abandoned it, and all the affairs of it; an *ascetic.* So in Monsieur D'Olive, 1606:—

"He like a *mortified* hermit sits."

And in Love's Labour's Lost, Act i. Sc. 1:—

"My loving lord, Dumain is *mortified*;
The grosser manner of this world's delights
He throws upon the gross world's baser slaves"

Len. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry; there is Siward's son,
And many unrough[3] youths, that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

Ment. What does the tyrant?

Cath. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say, he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd course[a]
Within the belt of rule.

Ang. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands, move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Ment. Who then shall blame
His pester'd senses to recoil, and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself, for being there?

Cath. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly ow'd:
Meet we the med'cine[4] of the sickly weal;
And with him pour we, in our country's purge,
Each drop of us.

Len. Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower, and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

[*Exeunt, marching.*

[3] *And many unrough youths.* This expression means *smooth-faced, unbearded.* See the Tempest:—

"Till new born chins
Be *rough* and razorable."

[a] The old copies have "distemper'd *cause*." The correction is by the late Mr. Sidney Walker. It also occurs in Mr. Collier's folio.

[4] *The med'cine*, i. e. *the physician.* In The Winter's Tale, Camillo is called by Perdita "the *medecin* of our house."

SCENE III. Dunsinane. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, *and* Attendants.

Macb. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all;
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences, have pronounc'd me thus:
Fear not, Macbeth; no man, that's born of woman,
Shall e'er have power upon thee.——Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures[1]:
The mind I sway by, and the heart I bear,
Shall never sagg[2] with doubt, nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon[3]!
Where gott'st thou that goose look?

Serv. There is ten thousand——

Macb. Geese, villain?

Serv. Soldiers, sir.

Macb. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch[4]?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine

[1] Shakespeare derived this thought from Holinshed:—"The Scottish people before had no knowledge of nor understanding of fine fare or riotous surfeit; yet after they had once tasted the sweet poisoned bait thereof," &c. "those superfluities which came into the realme of Scotland with Englishmen."—*Hist. of Scotland*, p. 179.

[2] To *sag*, or *swag*, is to *hang down by its own weight, or by an overload.*

[3] *Cream-fac'd loon.* This word, which signifies *a base abject fellow*, is now only used in Scotland; it was formerly common in England, but spelt *lown*, and is justly considered by Horne Tooke as the past participle of *to low* or *abase*. *Lowt* has the same origin.

[4] *Patch*, an appellation of contempt, signifying *fool* or *low wretch.*

Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

Serv. The English force, so please you.

Macb. Take thy face hence. [*Exit* Serv.]—Seyton!
I am sick at heart,
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push
Will chair me ever, or disseat me now[5].
I have liv'd long enough: my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear[6], the yellow leaf:
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
Seyton!——

[5] The folio has "Will *cheere* me ever." The correction was suggested by Dr. Percy.

[6] *Sear* is *dry, withered.* We have the same expression and sentiment in Spenser's Pastorals:—

"Also my lustful leaf is *drie* and *seare.*"

Johnson would read "*May* of life." It must be confessed that it conveys a pleasing image, and might be supported, but the commentators have mistaken the phrase, *way of life* (Henley however is to be excepted), which Mr. Gifford has shown to be a simple periphrasis for *life.* A few examples will make this clear:—

"If that when I was mistress of myself,
And in my *way of youth* clear and untainted."
Massinger's Roman Actor.

"In *way of youth* I did enjoy one friend."
A very Woman.

i. e. *in my youth.*

"So much nobler
Shall be your *way of justice.*" *Thierry and Theodoret.*

i. e. *your justice.*

"Thus ready for the *way of life or death,*
I wait the sharpest blow." *Pericles.*

i. e. *for life or death.* The Latin cursus vitæ has the same signification.

"To return to Macbeth: *the sere and yellow leaf* is the commencement of the autumn of life; to this he has attained, and he laments, in a strain of great pathos and beauty, that it is unaccompanied by those blessings which render old age supportable. As his manhood was without virtue, so he has now before him the certain prospect of an old age without honour."

Enter SEYTON.

Sey. What is your gracious pleasure?
Macb. What news more?
Sey. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.
Macb. I'll fight, till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.
Sey. 'Tis not needed yet.
Macb. I'll put it on.
Send out more horses, skirr[7] the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear.—Give me mine armour.—
How does your patient, doctor?
Doct. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
That keep her from her rest.
Macb. Cure her of that:
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd[8];
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff[9]
Which weighs upon the heart?
Doct. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.
Macb. Throw physick to the dogs, I'll none of it.—
Come, put mine armour on; give me my staff:—

[7] *Skirr*, i. e. *scour the country round.*

[8] The following very remarkable passage in the Amadigi of Bernardo Tasso, which bears a striking resemblance to the words of Macbeth, was first pointed out in Mr. Weber's edition of Ford:—

"Ma chi puote con erbe, od argomenti
Guarir l'infermità del intelletto?"

Cant. xxxvi. *St.* 37.

The "nullis medicabilis herbis" of Ovid of course suggested it.

[9] It has been proposed to read *grief* here, but the iteration *stuff'd* and *stuff*, though now displeasing to our ears, Malone has shown from numerous similar examples of repetition in the poet, was likely to occur. To cleanse the bosom of grief is a thought that would have hardly entered his mind.

Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me :—
Come. sir. despatch :—If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land[10], find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, senna[11], or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence?—Hear'st thou of them?

Doct. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

Macb. Bring it after me.——
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. [*Exit.*

Doct. Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Country near* Dunsinane: *A Wood in view.*

Enter, with Drum and Colours, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD *and his* Son, MACDUFF, MENTETH, CATHNESS, ANGUS, LENOX, ROSSE, *and* Soldiers, *marching.*

Mal. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

Ment. We doubt it nothing.

Siw. What wood is this before us?

Ment. The wood of Birnam.

Mal. Let every soldier hew him down a bough[1],
And bear't before him; thereby shall we shadow

[10] To *cast the water* was the empiric phrase for finding out disorders, used by the water doctors.

[11] *What rhubarb, senna.* The first folio reads *cyme;* the second *cæny.* The emendation is Rowe's.

[1] A similar incident is recorded by Olaus Magnus, in his Northern History, lib. vii. cap. xx. De Strategemate Hachonis per Frondes.

The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.

Sold. It shall be done.

Siw. We learn no other, but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.

Mal. 'Tis his main hope:
For where there is advantage to be gone[2],
Both more and less[3] have given him the revolt;
And none serve with him but constrained things,
Whose hearts are absent too.

Macd. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

Siw. The time approaches,
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have, and what we owe[4].
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate;
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate:
Towards which, advance the war. [*Exeunt, marching*

SCENE V. Dunsinane. *Within the Castle.*

Enter, with Drums and Colours, MACBETH, SEYTON, *and* Soldiers.

Macb. Hang out our banners, on the outward walls
The cry is still, *They come.* Our castle's strength

[2] The old copy reads:—
"For where there is advantage to be *given.*"
Johnson thought it should be "advantage to be *gone,*" and I now think he was right. In my former edition I had said, we might perhaps read:— "For where there is advantage to be *gain'd.*'

[3] *More and less,* i. e. *greater and less,* or *high and low, those of all ranks.*

[4] *Make us know*
What we shall say we have, and what we owe.
i. e. when we shall know both our *rights* and *duties.*

Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie,
Till famine, and the ague, eat them up:
Were they not forc'd with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.—What is that noise?
[*A cry within, of women.*

Sey. It is the cry of women, my good lord.

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell[1] of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaught'rous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.—Wherefore was that cry?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.—
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time[2];
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death[3]. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale

[1] *My fell of hair*, i. e. *my hairy part, my capilititium. Fell* is *skin* or *hide*, with the hair or wool on it. Thus in King Lear:—
"The gougeres shall devour them flesh and *fell*."

[2] A writer in the Edinburgh Review has the following judicious remark on these passages:—"Macbeth, left alone, resumes much of that connection with humanity which he had so long abandoned: his thoughtfulness becomes pathetic; and when at last he dies the death of a soldier, the stern satisfaction with which we contemplate the act of justice that destroys him, is unalloyed by feelings of personal wrath or hatred. His fall is a sacrifice, and not a butchery."

[3] My friend Mr. Douce has observed that, perhaps no quotation is better calculated to show the propriety of the epithet "*dusty* death," than the following grand lines in the Vision of

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.——

Enter a Messenger.

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

Mess. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

Macb. Well, say, sir.

Mess. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

Macb. Liar and slave!

Mess. Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so:
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say, a moving grove.

Macb. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling[4] thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.—
I pull in resolution; and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend,
That lies like truth: *Fear not, till Birnam wood*
Do come to Dunsinane;—and now a wood

Pierce Plowman:—

"Death came driving after, and all to dust pashed,
Kings and Kaysers, Knightes and Popes."

[4] To *cling*, in the northern counties, signifies to *shrivel, wither*, or *dry up*. *Clung*-wood, is wood of which the sap is entirely dried or spent; and "Cattle are said to be *clung*, or hide-bound, when the skin doth cleave so fast to their sides that they cannot stir."—*Thomas's Dict. v. Coriago.* Pope expresses the same idea well in the 19th Iliad, v. 166:—

"*Shrunk with dry famine*, and with toils declin'd."

I cannot think, with Mr. Collier, that there is any difficulty in assigning a precise meaning to the word. Mason has shown that the phrase *pull in*, may be illustrated by a passage in Fletcher's Sea Voyage:— "And all my spirits,
As if they heard my passing bell go for me,
Pull in their powers, and give me up to destiny."

Comes toward Dunsinane.—Arm, arm, and out!—
If this, which he avouches, does appear,
There is nor flying hence, nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.—
Ring the alarum-bell:—Blow, wind! come wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *The same. A Plain before the Castle.*

Enter, with Drums and Colours, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD, MACDUFF, *&c. and their Army, with Boughs.*

Mal. Now near enough; your leavy screens throw down,
And show like those you are:—You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,
Lead our first battle: worthy Macduff, and we,
Shall take upon us[5] what else remains to do,
According to our order.

Siw. Fare you well.—
Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

Macd. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

[*Exeunt. Alarums continued.*

SCENE VII. *The same. Another Part of the Plain.*

Enter MACBETH.

Macb. They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the course[1].—What's he,

[5] The first folio reads *upon's.*

[1] *But, bearlike, I must fight the course.* This was a phrase at bear-baiting. "Also you shall see two ten dog *courses* at the great bear."—*Antipodes*, by Brome.

That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young SIWARD.

Yo. Siw. What is thy name?

Macb. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

Yo. Siw. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

Macb. My name's Macbeth.

Yo. Siw. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

Macb. No, nor more fearful.

Yo. Siw. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and young* Siward *is slain.*

Macb. Thou wast born of woman.—
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [*Exit.*

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macd. That way the noise is:—Tyrant, show thy face:
If thou be'st slain, and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kernes, whose arms
Are hir'd to bear their staves; either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou should'st be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited[2]: Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarum.*

[2] *Bruited* is *reported, noised abroad*; from *bruit*, Fr. So in King Henry IV. Part II.—"His death
Being *bruited* once," &c.

Enter MALCOLM *and old* SIWARD.

Siw. This way, my lord;—the castle's gently render'd:
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

Mal. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.

Siw. Enter, sir, the castle.
[*Exeunt. Alarum.*

Re-enter MACBETH.

Macb. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die[3]
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Re-enter MACDUFF.

Macd. Turn, hell-hound, turn.

Macb. Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back, my soul is too much charg'd
With blood of thine already.

Macd. I have no words,
My voice is in my sword[4]; thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [*They fight.*

Macb. Thou losest labour:
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air[5]
With thy keen sword impress, as make me bleed:

[3] *Why should I play the Roman fool, and die.* Alluding to the high Roman fashion of self-destruction, as in Brutus, Cassius, Antony, &c. The suicide of Cato of Utica is mentioned in Julius Cæsar:—

"I did blame *Cato* for the death
Which he did give himself."

[4] *My voice is in my sword.* Thus Casca, in Julius Cæsar:—
"Speak, hands, for me."

[5] *The intrenchant air,* i. e. *the air which cannot be cut.* So in Hamlet:— "For it is as the air invulnerable."

Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmed life[6], which must not yield
To one of woman born.

Macd. Despair thy charm;
And let the angel, whom thou still hast serv'd,
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

Macb. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man:
And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.—I'll not fight with thee.

Macd. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time.
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole; and underwrit,
Here may you see the tyrant.

Macb. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou oppos'd, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last: Before my body
I throw my warlike shield; lay on, Macduff;
And damn'd be him that first cries, *Hold, enough*[7].

[*Exeunt, fighting.*

[6] *I bear a charmed life.* In the days of chivalry, the champion's arms being ceremoniously blessed, each took an oath that he used no *charmed* weapons. Macbeth, in allusion to this custom, tells Macduff of the security he had in the prediction of the spirit. To this likewise Posthumus alludes in Cymbeline, Act v.—

"I, in mine own woe *charm'd*,
Could not find death."

Again in Spenser's Faerie Queene, b. i. c. 4:—

"*He bears a charmed* shield,
And eke enchanted arms, that none can pierce."

[7] To cry *hold!* was the word of yielding (according to Carew's

Retreat. Flourish. Re-enter, with Drum and Colours, MALCOLM, *old* SIWARD, ROSSE, LENOX, ANGUS, CATHNESS, MENTETH, *and* Soldiers.

Mal. I would, the friends we miss were safe arriv'd.

Siw. Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

Mal. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

Rosse. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt;
He only liv'd but till he was a man:
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

Siw. Then he is dead?

Rosse. Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measur'd by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

Siw. Had he his hurts before?

Rosse. Ay, on the front.

Siw. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death[8]:
And so his knell is knoll'd.

Survey of Cornwall, p. 74), that is, when one of the combatants cries so. To cry *hold!* when persons were fighting, was an authoritative way of separating them, according to the old military laws. This is shown by the following passage produced by Mr. Tollet: it declares it to be a capital offence "Whosoever shall strike stroke at his adversary, either in the heat or otherwise, if a third do cry *hold*, to the intent to part them."

Bellay's Instructions for the Wars, 1599.

This illustrates the passage in Act i. Sc. 5, of this play:—

"Nor heav'n peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry Hold! hold!"

[8] "When Siward, the martial Earl of Northumberland, understood that his son, whom he had sent against the Scotchmen, was slain, he demanded whether his wounds were in the fore part or hinder part of his body. When it was answered, 'in

Mal. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

Siw. He's worth no more;
They say, he parted well, and paid his score:
And so, God b' wi' him!—Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, *with* MACBETH'S *Head.*

Macd. Hail, king! for so thou art: Behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl[9],
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine,—
Hail, king of Scotland!

All. Hail, king of Scotland!

[*Flourish.*

Mal. We shall not spend a large expense[10] of time,
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland

the fore part;' he replied, '*I am right glad; neither wish I any other death to me or mine.*'"—*Camden's Remaines.*

The same incident is recorded by Holinshed, vol. i. p. 192.

[9] *Thy kingdom's pearl*, i. e. *thy kingdom's ornament, the choice* or *best part*, from the high estimation in which pearls were held. So in Endymion's Song and Tragedy:—

"An earl,
And worthily then termed Albion's *pearl*."

Holinshed mentions Scottish *pearls*. Rowe altered this to *peers*, without authority.

[10] Thus the old copy. Steevens justly observes that "To *spend* an *expense* is a phrase with which no reader will be satisfied." I think with him that "we certainly owe it to a mistake of a transcriber, or the negligence of a printer." It is possible that the poet's word was *expanse* for *space*, a sense in which it is often used, and especially by Locke, who well knew the proper force and meaning of words. Or it may have been *large extent*, a phrase for *space*, used by Charles Cotton:—

"Life in its *large extent* is scarce a span."

In such an honour nam'd[11]. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,—
As calling home our exil'd friends abroad,
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher, and his fiend-like queen;
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life;—this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time, and place:
So thanks to all at once, and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

[11] "Malcolm, immediately after his coronation, called a parliament at Forfair; in the which he rewarded them with lands and livings that had assisted him against Macbeth. Manie of them that were before *thanes* were at this time made *earles;* as Fife, Menteith, Atholl, Levenox, Murrey, Caithness, Rosse, and Angus." —*Holinshed's History of Scotland*, p. 176.

HAMLET.



Ophelia. Good night, sweet ladies, good night.
ACT iv. SC. 5.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE original story on which this play is built may be found in Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian. From thence Belleforest adopted it in his collection of novels, in seven volumes, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. It was from Belleforest that the old black letter prose Hystorie of Hamblet was translated; the earliest edition of which, known to the commentators, was dated in 1608; but it is supposed that there were earlier impressions.

The following passage is found in an Epistle, by Thomas Nashe, prefixed to Greene's Arcadia, which was published in 1589:—"I will turn back to my first text of studies of delight, and talk a little in friendship with a few of our rival translators. It is a common practice now-a-days, among a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every art and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint* [i. e. the law] whereunto they were born, and busie themselves with the endeavours of art, that could scarcely latinize their neck-verse, if they should have neede; yet English *Seneca*, read by candle-light, yeelds many good sentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and so forth: and if you entreat him faire in a frosty morning, he will affoord you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, Handfuls of tragical speeches. But O grief! *Tempus edax rerum*—what is it that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and *Seneca*, let bloud line by line, and page by page, at length must needs die to our stage."

It is manifest from this passage that some play on the story of Hamlet had been exhibited before the year 1589. Malone thinks that it was not Shakespeare's drama, but an elder performance on which, with the aid of the old prose History of Hamblet, his tragedy was formed.

In a tract, entitled Wits Miserie, or the World's Madnesse, discovering the incarnate Devils of the Age, published by Thomas Lodge in 1596, one of the devils is said to be "a foule lubber, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *ghost*, who cried so miserably

at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge.*" But it is supposed that this also may refer to an elder performance.

Dr. Percy possessed a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which had been Gabriel Harvey's, who had written his name and the date, 1598, both at the beginning and end of the volume, and many remarks in the intermediate leaves; among which are these words:—" The younger sort take much delight in Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort." Malone doubts whether this was written in 1598, because *translated Tasso* is named in another note; but it is not necessary that the allusion should be to Fairfax's translation, which was not printed till 1600: it may refer to the version of the first five books of the Jerusalem, published by R. C[arew] in 1594.

We may therefore safely place the date of the first composition of Hamlet at least as early as 1597; and, for reasons adduced by Mr. George Chalmers, we may presume that it was revised and the additions made to it in the year 1600.

The first entry on the Stationers' books is by James Roberts, July 26, 1602; and a copy of the play in its first state, printed for N. L. and John Trundell, in 1603, has recently been discovered. As in the case of the earliest impressions of Romeo and Juliet, and the Merry Wives of Windsor, this edition of Hamlet appears to have been either printed from an imperfect manuscript of the prompt books, or the playhouse copy, or stolen from the author's papers. It is next to impossible that it can have been taken down during the representation, as some have supposed was the case with the other two plays.

The variations of this early copy from the play of Hamlet, in its improved state, are too numerous and striking to admit a doubt of the play having been subsequently revised, amplified, and altered by the poet. There are even some variations in the plot; the principal of which are, that Horatio announces to the Queen Hamlet's unexpected return from his voyage to England; and that the Queen is expressly declared to be innocent of any participation in the murder of Hamlet's father, and privy to his intention of revenging his death. There are also some few lines and passages which do not appear in the revised copy. The principal variations are noticed in the course of the notes*.

It again issued from the press in 1604, in its corrected and amended state, and in the title-page is stated to be " newly imprinted, and enlarged to almost as much again as it was, accord-

* There are some singular variations in the names of the Dramatis Personæ. *Corambis* and *Montano* are the names given to the *Polonius* and *Reynaldo* of the revised play; for *Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern* we have *Rossencraft* and *Gilderstone*; and *Osrick* is merely designated a *Braggart Gentleman.*

ing to the true and perfect copy." From these words Malone had drawn the natural conclusion that a former less perfect copy had issued from the press: but his star was not propitious; he never saw it. Though it is said to have formed part of the collection of Sir Thomas Hanmer, it only came to light at the commencement of the year 1825; too late, alas! even to gratify the enthusiasm of his zealous friend, that worthy man, James Boswell; upon whom devolved the office of giving to the world the accumulated labours of Malone's latter years, devoted to the illustration of Shakespeare.

The character of Hamlet has been frequently discussed, and with a variety of contradictory opinions. Johnson and Steevens have made severe animadversions upon some parts of his conduct. A celebrated writer of Germany has very skilfully pointed out the cause of the defects in Hamlet's character, which unfit him for the dreadful office to which he is called. "It is clear to me," says Goëthé, "that Shakespeare's intention was to exhibit the effects of a great action, imposed as a duty upon a mind too feeble for its accomplishment. In this sense I find the character consistent throughout. Here is an oak planted in a china vase, proper to receive only the most delicate flowers. The roots strike out, and the vessel flies to pieces. A pure, noble, highly moral disposition, but without that energy of soul which constitutes the hero, sinks under a load which it can neither support nor resolve to abandon altogether. *All* his obligations are sacred to him; but this alone is above his powers! An impossibility is required at his hands; not an impossibility in itself, but that which is so to him. Observe how he shifts, turns, hesitates, advances, and recedes! how he is continually reminded and reminding himself of his great commission, which he, nevertheless in the end, seems almost entirely to lose sight of, and this without ever recovering his former tranquillity*."

Dr. Akenside suggested that the madness of Hamlet is not altogether feigned; and the notion has of late been revived. Dr. Ferriar, in his Essay towards a Theory of Apparitions, has termed the state of mind which Shakespeare exhibits to us in *Hamlet*,—as the consequence of conflicting passions and events operating on a frame of acute sensibility,—*latent lunacy*.

"It has often occurred to me," says Dr. F., "that Shakespeare's character of Hamlet can only be understood on this principle:—He feigns madness for political purposes, while the poet means to represent his understanding as really (and unconsciously to himself) unhinged by the cruel circumstances in which he is placed. The horror of the communication made by his father's spectre, the necessity of belying his attachment to an innocent and deserving object, the certainty of his mother's guilt, and the super-

* William Meister's Apprenticeship, b. iv. ch. 13

natural impulse by which he is goaded to an act of assassination abhorrent to his nature, are causes sufficient to overwhelm and distract a mind previously disposed to "weakness and to melancholy," and originally full of tenderness and natural affection. By referring to the play it will be seen that his real insanity is only developed after the mock play. Then, in place of a systematic conduct, conducive to his purposes, he becomes irresolute, inconsequent; and the plot appears to stand unaccountably still. Instead of striking at his object, he resigns himself to the current of events, and sinks at length ignobly under the stream*."

A comedian of considerable talents has entered at large into the question of Hamlet's madness, and has endeavoured to show that the poet meant to represent him as insane†. Mr. Boswell, on the contrary, in a very judicious and ingenious review of Hamlet's character, combats the supposition, and thinks it entirely without foundation. He argues that "the sentiments which fall from Hamlet in his soliloquies, or in confidential communication with Horatio, evince not only a sound but an acute and vigorous understanding. His misfortunes, indeed, and a sense of shame, from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother, have sunk him into a state of *weakness and melancholy*; but though *his mind is enfeebled*, it is by no means deranged. It would have been little in the manner of Shakespeare to introduce two persons in the same play whose intellects were disordered; but he has rather, in this instance, as in King Lear, a second time effected what, as far as I can recollect, no other writer has ever ventured to attempt—the exhibition on the same scene of real and fictitious madness in contrast with each other. In carrying his design into execution, Hamlet feels no difficulty in imposing upon the King, whom he detests; or upon Polonius, and his schoolfellows, whom he despises: but the case is very different indeed in his interviews with Ophelia; aware of the submissive mildness of her character, which leads her to be subject to the influence of her father and her brother, he cannot venture to entrust her with his secret. In her presence, therefore, he has not only to assume a disguise, but to restrain himself from those expressions of affection which a lover must find it most difficult to repress in the presence of his mistress. In this tumult of conflicting feelings, he is led to overact his part, from a fear of falling below it; and thus gives an appearance of rudeness and harshness to that which is, in fact, a painful struggle to conceal his tenderness‡."

Mr. Richardson, in his Essay on the Character of Hamlet, has well observed that "the spirit of that remarkable scene with

---

* Essay on the Theory of Apparitions, p. 111—115.

† On the Madness of Hamlet, by Mr. W. Farren.—*London Magazine, for April*, 1824.

‡ Boswell's edition of Malone's Shakespeare, vol. vii. p. 536.

Ophelia, where he tells her, 'get thee to a nunnery,' is frequently misunderstood; and especially by the players. At least it does not appear to have been the poet's intention that the air and manner of Hamlet in this scene should be perfectly grave and serious; nor is there anything in the dialogue to justify the grave and tragic tone with which it is frequently spoken. Let Hamlet be represented as delivering himself in a light and airy, unconcerned and thoughtless manner, and the rudeness so much complained of will disappear." His conduct to Ophelia is intended to confirm and publish the notion he would convey of his pretended insanity, which could not be marked by any circumstance so strongly as that of treating her with harshness or indifference. The sincerity and ardour of his passion for her had undergone no change: he could not explain himself to her; and, in the difficult and trying circumstances in which he was placed, had therefore no alternative.

The poet indeed has marked with a master hand the amiable and polished character of Hamlet. Ophelia designates him as having been "The glass of fashion, and the mould of form;" and though circumstances have unsettled him, and thrown over his natural disposition the clouds of melancholy, the kindness of his disposition and his natural hilarity break through on every occasion which arises to call them forth.

Mr. Boswell has remarked, that "the scene with the grave-diggers shows, in a striking point of view, his good-natured affability. The reflections which follow afford new proofs of his amiable character. The place where he stands, the frame of his own thoughts, and the objects which surround him, suggest the vanity of all human pursuits; but there is nothing harsh or caustic in his satire; his observations are dictated rather by feelings of sorrow than of anger; and the sprightliness of his wit, which misfortune has repressed, but cannot altogether extinguish, has thrown over the whole a truly pathetic cast of humorous sadness. Those gleams of sunshine, which serve only to show us the scattered fragments of a brilliant imagination, crushed and broken by calamity, are much more affecting than a long uninterrupted train of monotonous woe."

Coleridge has said that "in Hamlet Shakespeare seems to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to the objects of our senses, and our meditation on the working of our minds,—an equilibrium between the real and the imaginary worlds." Mr. Strachey has, in a recent Essay on the play, entered more at large into this view of the character, and has endeavoured to show that Shakespeare has here resolved the problem "how to reconcile Thought and Action, so that the latter shall be rational, deliberative, and conscientious, and yet not paralysed, nor enfeebled by a too great sense of responsibility and fear of consequences."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, King *of* Denmark.
HAMLET, *Son to the former, and Nephew to the present* King.
POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*
HORATIO, *Friend to* Hamlet.
LAERTES, *Son to* Polonius.
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, } *Courtiers.*
OSRIC, *a Courtier.*
Another Courtier.
A Priest.
MARCELLUS, BERNARDO, } *Officers.*
FRANCISCO, *a Soldier.*
REYNALDO, *Servant to* Polonius.
A Captain. *An* Ambassador.
Ghost *of* Hamlet's Father.
FORTINBRAS, Prince *of* Norway.

GERTRUDE, Queen *of* Denmark, *and Mother to* Hamlet.
OPHELIA, *Daughter to* Polonius.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-diggers, Sailors, Messengers, *and other* Attendants.

SCENE—Elsinore.

HAMLET,

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I.

Scene I. Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

Francisco *on his Post. Enter to him* Bernardo.

Bernardo.

WHO'S there?

Fran. Nay, answer me[1]; stand, and unfold
Yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

[1] i. e. *me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watchword; which appears to have been, "Long live the king!"

Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals[3] of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think I hear them.—Stand!—Who's there?
Hor. Friends to this ground.
Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.
Fran. Give you good night.
Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath reliev'd you?
Fran. Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.
Mar. Holla! Bernardo!
Ber. Say.
What, is Horatio there?
Hor. A piece of him.
Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.
Hor. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night[4]?
Ber. I have seen nothing.
Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy;
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us;
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;

[3] Shakespeare uses *rivals* for *associates, partners;* and *competitor* has the same sense throughout these plays. It is the original sense of *rivalis.* The etymology was pointed out by Acro Grammaticus in his Scholia on Horace: "A *rivo* dicto *rivales* qui in agris rivum haberent communem, et propter eum sæpe discrepabant." Streams are frequently very variable boundaries, encroaching or receding by time or flood on one side or the other, and this is the cause that the term for neighbours, derived from a limit so jealously watched, took very readily a secondary sense by its application to competitors for an advantage.

[4] So the quartos. The folio gives this line to Marcellus.

That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve[5] our eyes, and speak to it.
Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yond same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course t'illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one,—
Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Enter Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure like the king that's dead.
Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio[6].
Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.
Hor. Most like:—it harrows[7] me with fear, and wonder.
Ber. It would be spoke to.
Mar. Question it, Horatio.
Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,

[5] To *approve* or *confirm.* "Ratum habere aliquid."—*Baret.*

[6] It was a vulgar notion that a supernatural being could only be spoken to with effect by persons of learning; exorcisms being usually practised by the clergy in Latin. Toby, in The Night Walker of Beaumont and Fletcher, says:—

"Let's call the butler up, for *he speaks Latin,*
And that will daunt the devil."

[7] The first quarto reads, "it *horrors* me." To *harrow* is to *distress,* to vex, to disturb. To *harry* and to *harass* have the same origin, from the Gothic *haer,* an armed force. Milton has the word in Comus:—

"Amaz'd I stood, *harrow'd* with grief and fear."

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee.
speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak, speak, I charge thee, speak.
[*Exit* Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle[8],
He smote the sledded Polack[9] on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and just[10] at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

[8] *Parle*, the same as *parley, a conference between enemies.*

[9] i. e. the *sledged Polander; Polaque*, Fr. the old copy reads *Pollax*. Mr. Boswell suggests that it is just possible the old reading may be right, *pole-ax* being put for the person who carried the *pole-axe*, a mark of rank among the Muscovites, as he has shown from Milton's Brief History of Muscovy.

[10] The quarto of 1603, and that of 1604, have *jump*. The folio reads *just*. *Jump* and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakespeare. So in Chapman's May Day, 1611:—

"Your appointment was *jumpe* at three with me."

"Thou bendest neither one way nor tother, but art even *jumpe* stark naught."—*Baret*, B. 486.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know not;
But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war?
Why such impress[11] of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day;
Who is't that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him),
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compáct,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
Which he stood seiz'd of[a], to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king: which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,

[11] To *impress* signifies only to retain shipwrights by giving them *prest* money for holding themselves in readiness to be employed. Thus in Chapman's second book of Homer's Odyssey:—

"I from the people straight will *press* for you,
Free voluntaries."

See King Lear, Act iv. Sc. 2; and Blount's Glossography, in v. *prest.*

[a] The folio has, "Which he stood seiz'd *on.*" *Moiety*, in the next line, is a dissyllable.

Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same co-mart[12],
And carriage of the article design'd[13],
His fell to Hamlet: Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of inapproved mettle hot and full[14],
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd[15] up a list of lawless[16] resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't: which is no other
(As it doth well appear unto our state,)
But to recover of us, by strong hand,
And terms compulsative[17], those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost: And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations;
The source of this our watch; and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage[18] in the land.

[19] [*Ber.* I think, it be no other, but e'en so:
Well may it sort, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was, and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is, to trouble the mind's eye.

[12] *Co-mart* is the reading of the quarto of 1604; the folio reads *cov'nant*. *Co-mart*, it is presumed, means *a joint bargain*. No other instance of the word is known.

[13] *Carriage* is *purport, bearing*. *Designed* is here used in the sense of *designatus*, Lat.

[14] Thus the first quarto. The folio has, "Of *unimproved* mettle hot and full. The reading of the quarto seems preferable, as the idea excited by *Young* Fortinbras is of one animated by courage at full heat, but at present *untried*,—the ardour of inexperience.

[15] i. e. *snapped up* or *taken up hastily*. "*Scroccare* is *to shark or shift for* [illegible] *thing, to snap*. The quarto 1603, instead of *a list* has *a sight*.

[16] All the quartos have *lawless*. The folio *landless*.

[17] The quartos have *compulsatory*.

[18] *Romage*, now spelt *rummage*, and in common use as a verb, though not as a substantive, for making a thorough ransack or search, a busy and tumultuous movement.

[19] All the lines within crotchets in this play are omitted in the folio of 1623. The title-pages of the quartos of 1604 and 1605 declare this play to be "enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copie."

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets[20];
As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star[21],
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
And even the like precurse of fierce events,—
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen[22] coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—]

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me[23].—Stay, illusion[a]!

[20] There is evidently some corruption of the text here. It has been conjectured that a line has been omitted, and perhaps we might read:—

" The sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;
And as the earth, so portents fill'd the sky,
Asters, with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun, &c."

The poet uses *disaster* as a verb in the following passage in Antony and Cleopatra, Act ii. Sc. 7:—"To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in it, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully *disaster* the cheeks." It has therefore been conjectured that we should read *disastering* here.

[21] *The moist star*, i. e. *the moon.*

" Not that night-wand'ring pale and *watry star*."
Marlowe's Hero and Leander.

[22] *Omen* is here put by a figure of speech for *predicted event.*

[23] The person who crossed the spot on which a spectre was seen became subject to its malignant influence. Among the reasons for supposing the death of Ferdinand, Earl of Derby, (who died young, in 1594,) to have been occasioned by witchcraft, is the following:—"On Friday there appeared a tall man, *who twice crossed him* swiftly; and when the earl came to the place where he saw this man he fell sick."—*Lodge's Illustrations of English History*, vol. iii. p. 48.

[a] The quartos have here a stage direction: "It spreads his arms."

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing, may avoid,
O, speak!
Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*
Speak of it:—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partizan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here! [*Exit* Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone!

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable[24],
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn[25],
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and at his warning,

[24] Thus in Macbeth:—

"As easy may'st thou the *intrenchant air*
With thy keen sword impress."

And in King John:—

"Against the *invulnerable clouds* of heaven."

[25] The folio has *day* instead of *morn*, which is the reading of the quartos.

"And now *the cocke, the morning's trumpeter*,
Play'd hunts-up for the day-star to appear."

Drayton.

Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring[26] spirit hies
To his confine; and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock[27].
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then they say no spirit can walk[28] abroad;
The nights are wholesome: then no planets strike,
No fairy takes[29], nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious[30] is the time.

[26] *The extravagant and erring spirit.* "*Extra-vagans*, wandering about, going beyond bounds." Thus in Othello:—

"To an *extravagant* and wheeling stranger."

It is remarkable that *stravagant* is the reading of the first quarto, which Steevens points out as used in the sense of *vagrant.* "They took me up for a *stravagant.*" This is the "*stravagare*" of the Italians; "to wander, to gad, or stray beyond or out of the way." Thus in A Midsummer Night's Dream:—

"And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach, ghosts *wandering* here and there
Troop home."

Erring is *erraticus, straying or roving up and down.* Mr. Douce has justly observed that "the epithets *extravagant* and *erring* are highly poetical and appropriate, and seem to prove that Shakespeare was well acquainted with the Latin language."

[27] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus, giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius of Tyana, says, "that it vanished with a little gleam as soon as the cock crowed." There is a Hymn of Prudentius, and another of St. Ambrose, in which it is mentioned; and there are some lines in the latter very much resembling Horatio's speech. Mr. Douce has given them in his Illustrations of Shakespeare.

[28] Thus the folio. The quartos have, *dares stir,* except that of 1603, which has, *dare walk.*

[29] i. e. *No fairy blasts,* or *strikes.* Palsgrave has "*Taken,* as children's limbs be by the fairies, Faée." Thus in the Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iv. Sc. 4:—

"And there he blasts the tree and *takes* the cattle."

See note on that passage.

[30] It has already been observed that *gracious* is sometimes used

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn[31], in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill:
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet: for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently[32]. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *The same. A Room of State in the same.*

Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, *and* Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green: and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye[1];
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,

by Shakespeare for *graced, favoured.* Vide note on As You Like It, Act i. Sc. 2.

[31] The first quarto has *sun.*

[32] The quarto has "most *convenient.*"

[1] Thus the folio. The quarto reads:—

In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along:—For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds[2] of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting
Thus much the business is: We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait[3] herein; in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject:—and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers[4] of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these dilated articles allow[5].

"With *an* auspicious and *a* dropping eye."
The same thought occurs in The Winter's Tale:—"She had *one eye declined* for the loss of her husband, *another elevated* that the oracle was fulfilled." There is an old proverbial phrase, "To laugh with one eye, and cry with the other."

[2] The quarto reads, *bands*; but *bands* and *bonds* signified the same thing in the poet's time.

[3] *Gait* here signifies *course, progress.* The old copies spell it *gate. Gait* for road, way, path, is still in use in the north. We have this word again in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Act v. Sc. 2:—

"Every fairy takes his *gait.*"

[4] Thus the quartos. The folio has, *For bearing.*

[5] Malone says, "the poet should have written *allows*;" but the

Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: What would'st thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father[6].
What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord[7],
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

grammar and practice of Shakespeare's age was not strict in the concordance of plural and singular in noun and verb; and numerous examples might be adduced from his cotemporaries to prove this. The question is, Are the writers of that time to be tried by modern rules of grammar, with which they were not acquainted? The first quarto reads:—

" No further personal power
To business with the king
Than those *related articles do shew.*"

[6] The various parts of the body enumerated are not more *allied, more necessary* to each other, than the throne of Denmark, i. e. the king, is bound to your father to do him service. But it is most probable that Shakespeare wrote—

Than *to* the throne of Denmark *is* thy father

[7] The folio has, *Dread my lord.*

Pol. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my slow leave,
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:]
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will[8].—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,——

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind[9].
[*Aside.*

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord, I am too much i' the sun[10].

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids[11]

[8] In the first quarto this passage stands thus:—
"*King.* With all our heart, Laertes, fare thee well.
Laert. I in all love and dutie take my leave. [*Exit.*"
The king's speech may be thus explained:—"Take an auspicious hour, Laertes; be thy time thine own, and thy best virtues guide thee in spending of it at thy will." The editors had rendered this passage doubly obscure by erroneously placing a colon at graces.

[9] *A little more than kin, and less than kind.* This passage has baffled the commentators, who are at issue about its meaning; but none of them have rightly explained it. A cotemporary of the poet will lead us to its true meaning. *A little more than kin* has been rightly said to allude to the double relationship of the king to Hamlet, as uncle and step-father, his *kindred by blood* and *kindred by marriage.* By *less than kind* Hamlet means *degenerate and base.* "Going *out of kinde*," says Baret, "which goeth *out of kinde, which dothe or worketh dishonour to his kinred.* Degener; *forlignant.*"—ALVEARIE, K. 59. "*Forligner*," says Cotgrave, "*to degenerate*, to grow *out of kind*, to differ in conditions with his ancestors." That *less than kind* and *out of kind* have the same meaning, who can doubt?

[10] i. e. *deprived of the charities of kindred.* See note on Much Ado about Nothing, Act ii. Scene 1, note 22. It is probable that a quibble is intended between *sun* and *son.* *i. e.* "I am titularly your son, by your marriage with my mother,—the more's the pity." The old spelling is *sonne.*

[11] i. e. *with eyes cast down.* To *vail* is to *lower.*

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st, 'tis common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe[12].

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But you must know your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term
To do obsequious sorrow[13]. But to persever
In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven;
A heart unfortified, or mind impatient;
An understanding simple and unschool'd:

[12] "My grief lies all within;
And these external manners of lament
Are merely shadows to the unseen grief,
That swells with silence in the tortur'd soul."
King Richard II.

[13] *Obsequious sorrow* is *dutiful, observant sorrow.* Shakespeare seems to have used this word generally with a feeling for the more general scope of the Latin derivative, even when he connects it with funeral rites.

For what, we know, must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? Fye! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing[14] woe; and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less nobility of love[15],
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire:
And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet;
I pra· thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,

[14] *Unprevailing* was used in the sense of *unavailing* as late as Dryden's time. "He may often *prevail* himself of the same advantages in English."—*Essay on Dramatic Poetry*, 1st ed.

"And dyvers noble victoryes, as the history doth express,
That he atchyved to the honor of the town,
Could not him *prevayle* whan Fortune lyst to frown."
Metrical Visions, by G. Cavendish, p. 81.

[15] This was a common form of figurative expression. The Ghost, describing his affection for the Queen, says:—

"To me, whose *love was of that dignity.*"

But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell;
And the king's rouse[16] the heaven shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* King, Queen, Lords, *&c.*

POLONIUS, *and* LAERTES.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve[17] itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon[18] 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fye on't! O fye! 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in nature,
Possess it merely[19]. That it should come to this!
But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion[20] to a satyr: so loving to my mother,

[16] The quarto of 1603 reads:—

"The rowse the king shall drink unto the prince."

A *rouse* appears to have been a deep draught to the health of any one, in which it was customary to empty the glass or vessel. Its etymology is uncertain; but I suspect it to be only an abridgment of *carouse*, which is used in the same sense.—*See Peacham's Complete Gentleman*, 1627, p. 194.

Carouse seems to have come to us from the French, who again appear to have derived it from the German *gar-auss*, to drink all out: at least so we may judge from the following passage in Rabelais, B. iii. Prologue:—"Enfans, beuvez a plein godets. Si bon ne vous semble, laissez le. Je ne suis de ces importuns lifrelofres, qui par force, par outrage, et violence contraignent les gentils compaignons trinquer, *boire caraus, et allauz.*"

The reader may consult Mr. Gifford's Massinger, vol. i. p. 240.

[17] To *resolve* had anciently the same meaning as to *dissolve*. "To thaw or *resolve* that which is frozen; *regelo.*—The snow is *resolved* and melted. To till the ground, and *resolve* it into dust." *Cooper.* This is another word in a Latin sense; but it is not peculiar to Shakespeare.

[18] The old copy reads, *cannon*; but this was the old spelling of *canon*, a law or decree.

[19] i. e. *absolutely, solely, wholly. Mere*, Lat.

[20] *Hyperion*, or Apollo, always represented as a model of beauty,

That he might not beteem[21] the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: And yet, within a month!—
Let me not think on't;—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;—why she, even she,—
O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason[22],

as the Satyr personified lust. Shakespeare has been followed by the learned Gray in the accentuation of this name:—

"Hyperĭon's march and glittering shafts of war."

Sir William Alexander and Drummond have accented it properly, Hypĕrĭon.

[21] *Beteem*, i. e. *to allow, to vouchsafe.* This word being of uncommon occurrence, it was changed to *permit* by Rowe; and to *let e'en* by Theobald. Steevens had the merit of pointing out the passage in Golding's Ovid, which settles its meaning:—

"Yet could he not *beteeme*
The shape of any other bird than egle for to seeme.
"Nulla tamen alite verti
Dignatur, nisi quæ possit sua fulmine ferre."

The etymology has been mistaken by Steevens. It is from the A. S. ge-teman, to *warrantize;* and hence to *allow*, to *vouchsafe.* The word occurs again in A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act i. Sc. 2, in the same sense, and not in a different one, as Mr. Collier imagines. See vol. ii. p. 312, note 10.

[22] *Oh heaven! a beast that wants discourse of reason.* Mr. Gifford, not comprehending this, in a note on Massinger, vol. i. p. 149, thinks we should read, "discourse *and* reason." But "discourse *of* reason" was the phraseology of Shakespeare's time; and the poet again uses the same language in Troilus and Cressida, Act ii. Sc. 2:—

"Is your blood
So madly hot, that no *discourse of reason*—
Can qualify the same?"

In the language of the schools, "*Discourse* is that rational act of the mind by which we deduce or infer one thing from another." *Discourse of reason* therefore means *ratiocination.* Brutes have not this *reasoning faculty*, though they have what has been called *instinct* and memory. Hamlet opposes the *discursive* power of

Would have mourn'd longer,—married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married:—O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break, my heart: for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well;
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you.
And what make you[23] from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,——

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even, sir.—
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not have[24] your enemy say so:

the intellect of men to the instinct of brutes in Act iv. Sc. 4. Hobbes, in his Treatise of Human Nature, was the first to perceive the error into which the use of *discourse* might lead, and he therefore changes it:—"Because the word *discourse* is commonly taken for the coherence and consequence of words, I will, to avoid equivocation, call it *discursion*." The first quarto reads, "a beast devoid of reason." We have *discourse of thought*, for the *discursive range of thought*, in Othello, Act iv. Sc. 2.

[23] *What make you*, i. e. *what do you*. Vide note on Love's Labour's Lost, Act iv. Sc. 3.

[24] The quartos have, "I would not *hear*," which has evidently been changed to *have* in the folio, to avoid the disagreeable clash with *ear* in the next line.

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow student;
I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats[25]
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
'Would, I had met my dearest[26] foe in heaven
Ere[27] ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father,—Methinks, I see my father.

Hor. O, where,
My lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye[28], Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

[25] It was anciently the custom to give an entertainment at a funeral. The usage was derived from the Roman *cœna funeralis*; and is not yet disused in the North, where it is called an *arvel* supper.

[26] See note on Twelfth Night, Act v. Sc. 1, p. 437.

[27] This is the reading of the quarto of 1603. The folio reads, "*Ere* I had ever." The later quartos "*Or* ever."

[28] "Himself behind
Was left unseen, save to *the eye of mind.*"
Rape of Lucrece.

Chaucer has the expression in his Man of Lawe's Tale:—
"But it were with thilke *eyen of his mind,*
Which men mowen see whan they ben blinde."
And Ben Jonson, in his Masque of Love's Triumphs:—
"As only by the *mind's eye* may be seen."
And Richard Rolle, in his Speculum Vitæ, MS. speaking of Jacob's Dream:—
"That Jacob sawe with *gostly eye.*"
i. e. *the eye of the mind or spirit.*

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw who?
Hor. My lord, the king your father.
Ham. The king my father!
Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear; till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love let me hear!
Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night[29],
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at all points, exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd[30]
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them, the third night kept the watch;

[29] Thus the quarto 1603. The quarto, 1604, has:—
"In the dead *waste* and middle of the night."
I suffer the following note to stand as I had written it previous to the discovery of the earlier copy.

We have "that *vast* of night" in The Tempest, Act i. Sc. 2. Shakespeare has been unjustly accused of intending a quibble here between *waist* and *waste*. There appears to me nothing incongruous in the expression; on the contrary, by "the *dead waste* and *middle* of the night," I think, we have a forcible image of the void stillness of midnight.

[30] Thus all the quartos. The folio reads *bestill'd*. As Mr. Collier's corrector has wantonly substituted *bechill'd*, and that gentleman says, neither of the old readings is satisfactory, it becomes necessary to show that *distill'd* for *melted* or *dissolved* was at least familiar to the poet's time. Thus in Sylvester's Du Bartas, 4th Ed. 4to. p. 764:—

"Melt thee, *distill* thee, turne to waxe or snowe,
Make sad thy gesture, tune thy voice to woe."

Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Hor. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did:
But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head[31], and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud;
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver[32] up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?

[31] It seems that spectres were supposed to maintain an obdurate silence till interrogated by the persons to whom they made their especial appearance. The moment of the evanescence of spirits was supposed to be limited to the crowing of the cock. This belief is very ancient. See Prudentius Cathem. Hym. i. v. 40, and the various comments on that passage.

The first and second folios, and some of the quartos, have "*it* head." The possessive neutral pronoun *its* not being then common. The quarto, 1603, has *his* head. The third folio *its*.

[32] That part of the helmet which may be lifted up. Mr Douce

Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.
Ham. Pale, or red?
Hor. Nay, very pale.
Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. Most constantly.
Ham. I would I had been there.
Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.
Ham. Very like, very like: Stay'd it long?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.
Hor. Not when I saw it.
Ham. His beard was grizzl'd[33]? no?
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd[34].
Ham. I'll watch to-night;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.
Hor. I warrant you, it will.
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable[35] in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.
All. Our duty to your honour.

has given representations of the beaver, and other parts of a helmet, and fully explained them in his Illustrations, vol. i. p. 443.

[33] Thus the quartos. The folio has *grisly*.

[34] "And *sable* curls all *silvered* o'er with white."
Shakespeare's Twelfth Sonnet.

[35] The quarto of 1603 reads *tenible*. The other quartos *tenable*. The folio of 1623 *treble*.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewell.
[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, *and* BERNARDO.
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: 'would the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A Room in* Polonius' *House*

Enter LAERTES *and* OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; Farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.
Oph. Do you doubt that?
Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The pérfume and suppliance of a minute[1];
No more.
Oph. No more but so?
Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews[2], and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul

[1] This is the reading of the quarto copy. The folio has:—
"Sweet, not lasting,
The suppliance of a minute."
It is plain that *perfvme* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet not lasting.* "The *suppliance* of a minute" should seem to mean *supplying* or enduring only that short space of time as transitory and evanescent. The simile is eminently beautiful.

[2] *Thews*, i. e. *sinews and muscular strength.* Vide note on the Second Part of King Henry IV. Act iii. Sc. 2.

Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no soil, nor cautel[3] doth besmirch[4]
The virtue of his will[5]: but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safëty and health of the whole state[6];
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place[7]
May give his saying deed; which is no further,
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;

[3] *Cautel* is *cautious circumspection, subtlety*, or *deceit.* Minsheu explains it, "a crafty way to deceive." Thus in a Lover's Complaint:—

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
Applied to *cautels*, all strange forms receives."

And in Coriolanus:—

"Be caught by *cautelous* baits and practice."

"The virtue of his will" means his virtuous intentions.

[4] *Besmirch* is *besmear*, or *sully.*

[5] The folio erroneously prints *fear* instead of *will* which is found in all the quartos.

[6] *The safëty and health of the whole state.* Thus the quarto of 1604. In the folio it is altered to "The *sanctity*," &c. but the passage is there very incorrectly printed, and *sanctity* is probably an error for *sanity*. *Safety* is used as a trisyllable by Spenser and others. Thus Hall in his first Satire, b. iii.—

"Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea,
Though Thetis self should swear her safëty."

[7] So the quarto, 1604. The folio reads "peculiar sect and force."

And keep you in[a] the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest[8] maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart; But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede[9].

Laer. O fear me not.
I stay too long;—But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for: There, my blessing with you;
[*Laying his Hand on* LAERTES' *Head.*

[a] Thus the quartos. The folio has "Keep *within.*"

[8] i. e. *the most cautious, the most discreet.* In Greene's Never too Late, 1616:—"Love requires not chastity, but that her soldiers be *chary.*" And again:—"She lives chastly enough that lives *charily.*" We have *chariness* in the Merry Wives of Windsor; and *unchary* in Twelfth Night, Act iii. Sc. 4.

[9] i. e. *regards not his own counsel.* In The Two Angry Women of Abington, 1599, we have:—"Take heed, is a good *reed.*" And in Sternhold, Psalm i.—

"Blest is the man that hath not lent
To wicked *rede* his ear."

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou charácter[10]. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel[11];
But do not dull thy palm[12] with entertainment
Of each new hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel: but, being in,
Bear't that th'opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure[13], but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man:
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous; chief[14] in that.

[10] i. e. *mark, imprint, strongly infix.* In Shakespeare's 122nd Sonnet:—

"Thy tables are within my brain
Full *character'd* with lasting *memory.*"

And in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:—

"I do conjure thee,
Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
Are visibly *character'd* and engraved."

[11] The old copies read, "with *hoops* of steel;" but it is quite evident that it is a misprint for *hooks*, as the word *grapple* shows. *Grappling-hooks* is a familiar term, but who ever heard of *grappling* with *hoops* of steel! Yet this judicious correction by Malone has been called *unwarrantable.*

[12] *But do not dull thy palm.* This figurative expression means "do not *blunt* thy feeling by taking every new acquaintance by the hand, or by admitting him to the intimacy of a friend."

[13] i. e. *opinion; censura,* Lat. Thus in King Henry VI. Part II.—

"The king is old enough to give his *censure.*"

[14] The folio has:—

"Are of a most select and *generous cheff,* in that."

The quartos have *cheefe.* The line is so rugged and redundant with the words *of a,* and the sense so palpably obscure that I feel assured it is corrupt, and that they should be omitted. The sense will then be: "They in France of the best rank and station, are most select and *noble, chiefly* in that." Chief being used adver-

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all,—To thine ownself be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season[15] this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit* LAERTES.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution), I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

bially, and generous in its then familiar sense of noble or gentleman-like. See Florio in v. Generoso.

[15] "To *season*, for to *infuse*," says Warburton. "It is more than to infuse, it is to infix in such a manner that it may never wear out," says Johnson. But hear one of the poet's cotemporaries:—"*To season*, to *temper* wisely, to make more pleasant and acceptable."—*Baret.* Thus in Act ii. Sc. 1, Polonius says to Reynaldo, "You may *season* it in the charge." And in a former scene Horatio says:—

"*Season* your admiration for a while."

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted[16] in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus) you'll tender me a fool[17].

Oph. My lord, he hath impórtun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With all the vows of heaven[18].

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks[19]. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows[20]: these blazes, daughter,
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;

[16] *Unsifted*, i. e. *untried, inexperienced.*

[17] Shakespeare makes Polonius play on the equivocal use of the word *tender*, which was anciently used in the sense of *regard* or *respect*, as well as in that of *offer*. The folio reads "*roaming* it thus;" and the quarto, "*wrong* it thus."

[18] Thus the folio. The quartos:—

"With *almost* all the *holy* vows of heaven."

[19] This was a proverbial phrase. There is a collection of epigrams under that title: the woodcock being accounted a witless bird, from a vulgar notion that it had no brains. *Springes to catch woodcocks* means *arts to entrap simplicity.*

[20] Thus the quartos. The folio has "*Gives* the tongue vows." The quarto, 1603:—

"How prodigal the *tongue* lends the *heart* vows."

A few lines lower the folio repeats *daughter* after "From this time" at the end of the line, and misprints *For* instead of *From.*

Set your entreatments[21] at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, That he is young;
And with a larger tether[22] may he walk,
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows: for they are brokers[23],
Not of that die which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds[24],
The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold[1].
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager[2] air.
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

[21] i. e. "be more difficult of access, and let the *suits to you* for that purpose be of higher respect, than a command to parley."

[22] Figuratively, *with more license.*

[23] i. e. *panders.* The words *brokage* and *broker* were merely applied to love transactions, as they were to any other that took place by deputy. Words and vows being here spoken of as go-betweens, though delivered in person. Thus in A Lover's Complaint:—

"Know *vows* are ever *brokers* to defiling."

[24] The old copy has "pious *bonds*," which, although Mr. Collier retains it, is nonsense. Theobald gave the reading I adopt, which the context shows to be the true one.

[1] The folio absurdly prints, *is it* very cold? which Mr. Knight retains and defends.

[2] *Eager* was used in the sense of the French *aigre*, sharp.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A Flourish of Trumpets, and Ordnance shot off within.*

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse[3],
Keeps wassel, and the swaggering up-spring[4] reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettledrum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
[This heavy-headed revel, east and west[5],
Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe[6] us drunkards, and with swinish phrase

[3] *Wake* here evidently signifies a *late revel.* A *wake* originally was a nightly festival kept on the day of dedication of a church, *vigilia:* hence it came to signify any other night festival. To *wake* signified to *revel at night.* Vide Florio in voce *Veggia.* For *rouse* see note, p. 142, ante. To keep *wassel* was to devote the time to festivity. Vide Love's Labour's Lost, Act v. Sc. 2.

[4] I take *upspring* here to mean nothing more than *upstart.* Steevens, from a passage in Chapman's Alphonsus, thought that it might mean a *dance.*

[5] This and the following twenty-one lines are omitted in the folio. They had probably been omitted in representation, lest they should give offence to Anne of Denmark.

[6] *Clepe*, call; clýpian, Sax. The Danes were indeed proverbial as drunkards, and well they might be, according to the accounts of the time. "A lively French traveller, being asked what he had seen in Denmark, replied, 'Rien de singulier sinon qu'on y chante tous les jours *le Roi boit*,' alluding to the French mode of celebrating Twelfth Day." See De Brieux Origines de quelques Coutumes, p. 56. Heywood in his Philocothonista, or The Drunk-

Soil our addition[7]; and, indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin),
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion[8],
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'erleavens
The form of plausive manners;—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star[9],—
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: The dram of base
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt[10],
To his own scandal.]

ard Opened, &c. 1635, 4to. speaking of what he calls the vinosity of nations, says of the Danes, that they have made a profession thereof from antiquity, and are the first upon record that brought their wassel bowls and elbowe deepe healthes into this land."—*Douce.* Roger Ascham, in one of his Letters, says, "The Emperor of Germany, who had his head in the glass five times as long as any of us, never drank less than a good quart at once of Rhenish wine." See also Howel's Letters, 8vo. 1726, p. 236. Muffet's Health's Improvement, 4to. 1635, p. 294. Haringtons Nugæ Antiquæ, 8vo. 1804, vol. i. p. 349.

[7] *Soil our addition*, i. e. *characterize us by a swinish epithet.*

[8] *Complexion* for *humour*. By *complexion* our ancestors understood the constitutions or affections of the body. The quartos have, "*their* o'ergrowth."

[9] *Fortune's star*, has been thought to refer to *the influence of the planet supposed to govern our birth*, &c. But it may be questioned whether we should not read fortune's *scar*. In the next line the quarto has, "*their* virtues."

[10] The quarto of 1604, reads:—

"The dram of *eale*
Doth all the noble substance *of a* doubt."

The quarto of 1611 has *eaſe* instead of *eale*. It seems to me most probable that Shakespeare wrote:—

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace, defend us[11]!—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd[12],
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable[13] shape,
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O! answer me:

"Doth all the noble substance *oft adoubt*—"

Using the word *adoubt* for *doubt* in its active sense of to bring into doubt or suspicion. We have numerous old words of similar form, and in Latin the verb *dubito* is written *addubito*, by Cicero and others. It is evident that *dout* could not have been the poet's word, for the meaning is "the dram of base renders all the noble substance doubtful or suspicious," not that it extinguishes it altogether. This will appear from what precedes:—

"Or by some habit, that too much *o'erleavens*
The form of plausive manners."

I read *base* as suggested by the word *ease* of the quarto of 1611: from its more direct opposition to *noble* in the following line. "To *his* own scandal" is to the scandal of the noble substance. The personal pronoun *his* was generally used for *its*, which is of late introduction in our language.

[11] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to consist of three parts. When he first sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:—

"Angels and ministers of grace, defend us!"

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines that, whatever it be, he will venture to address it:—

"Be thou a spirit of health," &c.

This he says while his father's spirit is advancing; he then, as he had determined, speaks to him, and calls him:—

"Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!"—*Johnson.*

[12] "Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost?
Com'st thou from heaven, where bliss and solace dwell?
Or from the airie cold-engendering coast?
Or from the darksome dungeon-hold of hell?"
Acolastus, or After Wit, 1604.

[13] *Questionable* must not be understood in its present acceptation of *doubtful*, but as *conversable*, inviting question or conversation; this was the most prevalent meaning of the word in Shakespeare's time.

Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
Why thy canóniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements! why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd[14]
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in cómplete steel[15]
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[*The* Ghost *beckons* HAMLET

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves[16] you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again;—I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,

[14] Thus the folio. All the quartos have *interr'd.*

[15] It appears from Olaus Wormius, cap. vii. that it was the custom to bury the Danish kings in their armour. The accentuation of cómplete on the first syllable, and canónized on the second, is not peculiar to Shakespeare, but the practice of several of his contemporaries.

[16] The folio has *wafts.*

That beetles[17] o'er his base into the sea?
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason[18],
And draw you into madness? think of it:
[The very place puts toys[19] of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.]

Ham. It waves[20] me still:—Go on, I'll follow thee

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve.—
[Ghost *beckons.*
Still am I call'd;—unhand me, gentlemen;—
[*Breaking from them.*
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets[21] me:—
I say, away!—Go on, I'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt* Ghost *and* HAMLET.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

[17] i. e. *overhangs his base.* Thus in Sidney's Arcadia, b. i.—"Hills lift up their *beetle* brows, as if they would overlooke the pleasantnesse of their under prospect." The verb *to beetle* is apparently of Shakespeare's creation.

[18] "To deprive your *sovereignty* of reason," signifies to take from you or dispossess you of the *command* of reason. We have similar instances of raising the idea of virtues or qualities by giving them rank in Banquo's "*royalty* of nature," and even in this play we have "*nobility* of love," and "*dignity* of love."

[19] *Toys*, i. e. *charms, deceptions.* See Harington's Notes on Ariosto, p. 119. This and the three succeeding lines are not in the folio.

[20] The folio has "It *wafts* me."

[21] "Villains, set down the corse, or by St. Paul
I'll make a corse of him that disobeys."
King Richard III. Act i. Sc. 1.
To *let*, in old language is to *hinder*, to stay, to obstruct; and still a current term in leases and other legal instruments.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.
Hor. Have after:—To what issue will this come?
Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
Hor. Heaven will direct it[22].
Mar. Nay, let's follow him.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *A more remote Part of the Platform.*

Re-enter Ghost *and* HAMLET.

Ham. Where[1] wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go no further.
Ghost. Mark me.
Ham. I will.
Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
Ham. Alas, poor ghost!
Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.
Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
Ham. What?
Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confined to lasting fires[2],
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away[3]. But that I am forbid

[22] Marcellus answers Horatio's question, "To what issue will this come?" and Horatio also answers it himself with pious resignation, "Heaven will direct it."

[1] The quartos have *Whither.*

[2] The folio has "confin'd to *fast in* fires." The emendation was proposed by Heath, and the word *fires* seems to confirm it. The first quarto reads, "Confin'd in *flaming* fire." Steevens, Farmer, and Mason, think the old reading correct; but I am not convinced by their reasoning, and the word *fires* seems to require the epithet *lasting.*

[3] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into "the

To tell the secrets of my prison house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres[4];
Thy knotted[5] and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine[6]:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood.—List, list, O list!—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,——

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder[7].

Ham. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know't; that I, with wings as swift[a]

punytion of the saulis in purgatory." Dr. Farmer thus compressed his account:—"It is a nedeful thyng to suffer panis and torment;—sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uther sum: thus the mony vices—

Contrakkit in the corpis *be done away*
And purgit."

[4] "How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted
In the distraction of this madding fever."—*Sh. Son.* 108.

[5] The folio has *knotty*, and a little lower, "List, *Hamlet*, Oh list!"

[6] Vide note on The Comedy of Errors, Act iii. Sc. 2. It is *porpentine* in the old editions in every instance. *Fretful* is the reading of the folio; the quartos read *fearful*. The *irascible* nature of the animal is noted in a curious passage of the Speculum Vitæ, by Richard Rolle, MS.—

"That beest is felle and sone is wrath,
And when he is greved he wol do scathe;
For when he tenes [angers] he launches out felly
The scharpe pinnes in his body."

[7] There is an allusion to the ghost in this play, or in an older one of the same name, by Lodge in his Wit's Miserie and the World's Madness, 1596. He describes one of his Devils, by name Hate Virtue, as "a *foule lubber*, who looks as pale as the vizard of the Ghost, which cried so miserably at the theattre, *Hamlet, revenge.*"

[a] The folio repeats *haste* and omits *I* in this speech.

As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.
Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf[8],
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forgëd process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life[9],
Now wears his crown.
Ham. O, my prophetick soul,
Mine uncle!
Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with[a] traitorous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.
But soft! methinks, I scent the morning air;

[8] Thus the quartos. The folio has, "*rots* itself." In the Humorous Lieutenant, by Beaumont and Fletcher, we have:—
"This *dull* root pluck'd from Lethe's flood:—

[9] The quarto, 1603, reads, *heart*.

[a] The folio misprints *hath* for *with*, and two lines lower *this* for *his*.

Brief let me be:—Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure[10] hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon[11] in a vial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment: whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
And curd, like eager[12] droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping; by a brother's hand,

[10] This is also a Latinism, *securus, quiet,* or *unguarded.*

[11] *Hebenon* has been said to be derived from *henbane,* the oil of which, according to Pliny, dropped into the ears, disturbs the brain: and there is sufficient evidence that it was held poisonous by our ancestors, in Anton's Satires, 1606, we have:—

"The *poison'd henbane,* whose cold juice doth kill."

And Drayton, in his Barons' Wars, p. 51:—

"The *poisoning henbane* and the mandrake dread."

It is however certain that soporific and poisonous qualities were ascribed to *ebony;* called *ebene,* and *hebone,* by old English writers. Thus Gower, in his description of the house of sleep in the Confessio Amantis, says:—

"Of his couch
Within his chamber, if I shall touch,
Of *hebenus* that sleepy tree
The bordes all aboute be.

Marlowe, in his Jew of Malta, speaking of noxious things, says:—

"The blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
The juyce of *hebon,* and cocytus breath."

The French word *hebenin,* applied to anything made from ebony, comes indeed very close to the *hebenon* of Shakespeare. In confirmation of my conjecture, I find the newly discovered quarto, 1603, reads, *hebona.*

[12] In Sc. iv. we have *eager air* for *sharp biting air.* "*Eger,*" says Baret, "*sower, sharp,* acidus, aigre."

Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd[13];
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd[14], disappointed[15], unanel'd[16];
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
Ham. O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible[17]!
Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glowworm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire[18]:

[13] The quarto, 1603, has *deprived.* I have elsewhere observed that to *despatch* is to *rid,* and that in a summary manner.

[14] *Unhousel'd* is *without having received the sacrament.* Thus in Hormanni Vulgaria, 1519:—"He is departed without shryfte and *housyll.*" And in Speculum Vitæ, MS. it is a sin—

"To receive nat once in the yeare
Howsel and schrifte with conscience clere."

[15] *Disappointed* is the same as *unappointed,* and may be explained *unprepared.* A man well furnished for an enterprise is said to be well *appointed.* In Measure for Measure, Isabella addresses her brother, who is condemned to die, thus:—

"Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed."

[16] *Unanel'd* is *without extreme unction.* Thus in Cavendish's Life of Wolsey, edit. 1824, p. 324:—"Then we began to put him in mind of Christ's passion; and sent for the abbot of the place to *anneal* him." "The fyfth sacrament is *anoynting of seke men,* the whiche oyle is halowed of the bysshop, and mynystred by preestes that ben of lawfull age, in grete peryll of dethe: in lyghtnes and abatynge of theyr sikenes, yf God wyll that they lyve; and *in forgyveynge of their venyal synnes and releasynge of theyr payne,* yf they shal deye."—*The Festyval,* fol. 171.

[17] This line in the old copies is given to *the Ghost.* It had long since been suggested to Johnson that it evidently belongs to *Hamlet,* and Garrick always thus delivered it.

[18] *Uneffectual,* i. e. *shining without heat.* The use of *to pale* as a verb is rather unusual, but not peculiar to Shakespeare. It is to be found in Chaucer and our elder writers.

Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?

And shall I couple hell?—O fye!—Hold, hold, my heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory[19]
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, yes, by heaven.
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables[20], my tables,—meet it is, I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word[21];
It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.* [*Writing.*
I have sworn't.

[19] Thus in the Second Part of King Henry IV. Act iv. Sc. 1:—

"And therefore will he wipe his *tables* clean,
And keep no tell-tale in his *memory*."

"*Tables* or books, or registers for memorie of things," were then used by all ranks, and contained prepared leaves from which what was written with a silver style could easily be effaced.

[20] I follow the folio which repeats the words "my tables," and in a preceding line the word *yes*, thinking these repetitions have been intended to mark Hamlet's agitation.

[21] The quarto, 1603, has, *Now to the words.* By *Now to my word* Hamlet means *Now to my motto, my word of remembrance;* or as it is expressed by King Richard III. *word of courage.* Steevens asserted that the allusion is to the military *watchword.* A *word*, mot, or motto, was any short sentence, such as is inscribed on a token, or under a device or coat of arms. It was a common phrase. See Ben Jonson's Works, by Mr. Gifford, vol. ii. p. 102.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord! my lord!
Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet!
Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!
Ham. So be it!
Mar. [*Within.*] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord!
Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come[22].

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord!
Hor. What news, my lord?
Ham. O wonderful!
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.
Ham. No;
You will reveal it.
Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.
Mar. Nor I, my lord.
Ham. How say you then; would heart of man once think it?
But you'll be secret,——
Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.
Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.
Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part:
You, as your business, and desire, shall point you;—
For every man hath business, and desire,
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

[22] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air when they would have him come down to them. Thus in Tyro's Roaring Megge, 1598:—

"Yet ere I journie, Ile go see the kyte,
Come, come, bird, come: pox on you, you can mute."

Hor. These are but wild and hurling[23] words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes, 'Faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick[24], but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? We will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't.

Hor. In faith, My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny[a]?
Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
Consent to swear.

[23] The quartos have *whirling.*

[24] Warburton has ingeniously defended Shakespeare for making the Danish prince swear by *St. Patrick*, by observing that the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland. It is, however, more probable that the poet seized the first popular imprecation that came to his mind, without regarding whether it suited the country or character of the person to whom he gave it.

[a] Mr. Collier was informed by some gentlemen of Sheffield that *true-penny* is a mining term, signifying a particular indication in the soil of the direction in which ore is to be found.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword[25].

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic & ubique!* then we'll shift our ground:—
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear[a].

Ham. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the ground[26] so fast?
A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your[27] philosophy.
But come;——
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antick disposition on,—
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

[25] The custom of swearing by the sword, or rather by the cross at the upper end of it, is very ancient. In the Soliloquy of Roland, addressed to his sword, the cross which the gard and handle form is not forgotten:—"Capulo eburneo candidissime, *cruce* aurea splendidissime," &c.—*Turpini de Gestis Carol. Mag.* cap. 22. The name of Jesus was not unfrequently inscribed on the handle. The allusions to this custom are very numerous in our old writers, and Warburton has noticed it in Bartholinus De Causis Contempt. Mort. apud Danos. Simon Maioli, in his very curious book *Dierum Canicularium*, mentions that the ancient Germans swore by the sword and death. Leontes, in The Winter's Tale, Act ii. Sc. 3, says:—

"*Swear by this sword,*
Thou wilt perform my bidding."

[a] Some of the later quartos have "Swear *by his sword.*"

[26] The quartos have *earth.*

[27] Thus all the quartos. The folio has "*our* philosophy."

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, "Well, well, we know;"—or, "We could, an if we would;" or, "If we list to speak;"—or, "There be, an if they might;"—
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me:—This not to do[28];
So grace and mercy at your most need help you!
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit[29]! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

[28] The quarto 1604 reads—"this do swear." The construction of this passage is rather embarrassed, but the sense is sufficiently obvious without explanation.

[29] "Shakespeare has riveted our attention to the ghost by a succession of forcible circumstances:—by the previous report of the terrified sentinels,—by the solemnity of the hour at which the phantom walks,—by its martial stride and discriminating armour, visible only *per incertam lunam*, by the glimpses of the moon,—by its long taciturnity, by its preparation to speak, when interrupted by the morning cock,—by its mysterious reserve throughout its first scene with Hamlet,—by his resolute departure with it, and the subsequent anxiety of his attendants,—by its conducting him to a solitary angle of the platform, by its voice from beneath the earth,—and by its unexpected burst on us in the closet. Hamlet's late interview with the spectre must in particular be regarded as a stroke of dramatic artifice. The phantom might have told his story in the presence of the officers and Horatio, and yet have rendered itself as inaudible to them as it afterwards did to the queen. But suspense was the poet's object; and never was it more effectually created than in the present instance. Six times has the royal semblance appeared, but till now has been withheld from speaking. For this event we have waited with impatient curiosity, unaccompanied by lassitude, or remitted attention."—*Steevens.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Room in* Polonius' *House.*

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.

Polonius.

GIVE him this[a] money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marv'lous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said: very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers[1] are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus,—"I know his father, and his friends,
And, in part, him:"—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. "And, in part, him;—but, "you may say," not well:
But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so;"—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,

[a] The folio here misprints *his* for *this*; and two lines lower *maruels*, to mark the necessary syncope *marv'lous*.

[1] i. e. *Danes*. Warner, in his Albion's England, calls Denmark *Danske*.

As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing[2], swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing:—You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind;
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord,——

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant[3]:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes,
The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence;
"Good sir," or so[4]; or "friend," or "gentleman,"—
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country.

[2] "The cunning of *fencers* is now applied to *quarrelling*: they thinke themselves no men, if for stirring of a straw, they prove not their valure uppon some bodies fleshe."—*Gosson's Schole of Abuse*, 1579.

[3] The quarto 1604 has "a fetch of *wit*."

[4] *So*, for *so forth*, as in the last act:—"Six French rapiers and poniards with their assigns, as girdle, hanger, and *so*."

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this?—He does—
What was I about to say?—By the mass[5], I was
about to say something:—Where did I leave?

Rey. At, "closes in the consequence."
At, "friend, or so," and "gentleman."

Pol. At, closes in the consequence,—Ay, marry;
He closes with you thus:—"I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;
There falling out at tennis: or, perchance,
I saw him enter such a house of sale
(Videlicet, a brothel), or so forth."
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp[6] of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with assays of bias[7],
By indirections find directions out:
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son: You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God b'wi'you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord,——

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself[a].

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his musick.

Rey. Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell! [*Exit.*

[5] "*By the mass*" is omitted in the folio.

[6] The folios, erroneously, have *cape.*

[7] *Windlaces* is here used metaphorically for *tortuous devices.* Thus in the Mirror for Magistrates, p. 356:—

"Which by sly drifts, and *windlaces* aloof,
They brought about."

"To *assay*, or rather *essay*, of the French word *essayer*, *tentare*," says Baret.

[a] i. e. *in your own person*, personally add your own observations of his conduct to these inquiries respecting him.

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet[a],
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved[8] to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk[9],
And end his being: That done, he lets me go:

[a] The folio has *chamber*.

[8] Hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters or gyves round the ancles.

[9] i. e. *his breast*. "The *bulke* or *breast* of a man, Thorax, la poitrine."—*Baret*. Thus in King Richard III. Act i. Sc. 4, Clarence says:— "But still the envious flood
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth,—
But smothered it within my *panting bulk*."
Malone cites this and the following passage, and yet explains it *all his body!*— "Her heart
Beating her *bulk*, that his hand shakes withal."
Rape of Lucrece

And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come[10], go with me; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love;
Whose violent property foredoes[11] itself,
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—
What! have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry, that with better heed and judgement,
I had not quoted[12] him: I fear'd, he did but trifle,
And meant to wrack thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
It seems, it is as proper[13] to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

[*Exeunt.*

[10] The folio omits *Come.* In the next speech of Polonius it has *speed* instead of *heed,* and *feare* for *fear'd.*

[11] To *foredo* and to *undo* were synonymous. Thus in Othello:—
"That either makes me or *fordoes* me quite."

[12] To *quote* is to *note,* to *mark.* Thus in The Rape of Lucrece:—
"Yea, the illiterate
Will *quote* my loathed trespass in my looks."
This word in the quarto is written *coted,* which was the old orthography of *quoted.*

[13] The quartos read, "*By heaven* it is as proper," &c.

Scene II. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, *and* Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since not[1] th' exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from th' understanding of himself,
I cannot deem[2] of. I entreat you both,
That,—being of so young days brought up with him;
And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour[3],—
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus[4],
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry[5], and good will,
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,

[1] The quarto has, *sith nor.*
[2] Thus the first folio. The quartos have *dream.*
[3] The quarto has, *haviour.*
[4] This line is omitted in the folio.
[5] *Gentry* for *gentle courtesy.* "Gentlemanlinesse or *gentry*, kindness, or natural goodness. Generositas."—*Baret.*

Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But[6] we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent[7],
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz;
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of ye,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, Amen!

[*Exeunt* Ros. GUIL. *and some* Attendants

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Th' embassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king;
And I do think (or else this brain of mine

[6] The first folio omits *but;* and in the next line but one has *services.*

[7] This metaphorical expression seems derived from bending a bow. So in Much Ado about Nothing, Act ii. Sc. 3:—"it seems her affections have *their full bent.*" Hamlet in a future scene says:—
"They fool me to the very top of my *bent.*"
i. e. *to the utmost of my inclination* or *disposition.*

Hunts not the trail[8] of policy so sure
As it hath[9] us'd to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the embassadors;
My news shall be the fruit[10] to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.
[*Exit* POLONIUS.
He tells me, my dear Gertrude[11], he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Vol. Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand[12],—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,

[8] i. e. *the trace* or *track*. Vestigium. It is that vestige, whether of footmarks or scent, which enables the hunter to follow the game.

[9] The first folio reads, *as I have*.

[10] Thus the quartos. The first folio misprints *news* for *fruit*, by which *dessert* is meant.

[11] The folios have, "my sweet queen, that."

[12] i. e. *deluded, imposed on, deceived by false appearances*. It is used several times by Shakespeare, Macbeth, Act iii. Sc. 1; Much Ado about Nothing, Act iv. Sc. 1; Cymbeline, Sc. ult.

Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay[13] of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee[14];
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Gives a Paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise;
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well:
And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour:
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together.
Most welcome home!
[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate[15]
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—
I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:

[13] *To give the assay of arms* is "to attempt or essay anything in arms, or by force. *Accingi armis.*"

[14] That is, "the king gave his nephew a *feud* or *fee* in land of that annual value." The quartos read *three score* thousand.

[15] *Expostulate*, i. e. *to inquire.* Mr. Hunter has given two pertinent instances of the use of the word in this sense. "Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained."

Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it; for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.
I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather and surmise.
—"To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,"——
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautified* is a vile phrase[16]; but you shall hear.—Thus:

"In her excellent white bosom, these, &c."[17]

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.—

"Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [*Reads.*

[16] Vile as Polonius esteems the phrase, from its equivocal meaning, Shakespeare has used it again in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:—

"Seeing you are *beautified*
With goodly shape," &c.

Nash, in his dedication of Christ's Tears over Jerusalem, 1594:—"To the most *beautified* Lady Elizabeth Cary." It is not uncommon in dedications and encomiastic verses of the poet's age.

[17] See note on The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act iii. Sc. 1. Formerly the word *these* was usually added at the end of the superscription of letters. The folio reads:—"*These* in her excellent white bosom these."

Doubt, that the sun doth move:
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET."

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me:
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me), what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb[18];
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? No, I went round[19] to work,

[18] "If I had play'd the *desk*, or *table-book*;
Or given my heart a *winking*, mute and dumb."
That is, "If I had acted the part of *depositary* of their secret loves, or given my heart a *hint* to be mute about their passion." The quartos read:—"given my heart a *working*," and the modern editors follow this reading: I prefer the reading of the folio. "Conniventia, a *winking at*; a sufferance; *a feigning not to see or know*." The pleonasm, *mute and dumb*, is found in the Rape of Lucrece:—

"And in my hearing be you *mute and dumb*."

[19] i. e. *plainly, roundly, without reserve.* Polonius, in the third act, says, "be *round* with him."

And my young mistress thus I did bespeak;
" Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy star[20];
This must not be:" and then I precepts gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed (a short tale to make),
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves[21],
And all we wail[22] for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time (I'd fain know that),
That I have positively said, " 'Tis so,"
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
[*Pointing to his Head and Shoulder.*
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

[20] Thus all the old copies, prior to the folio of 1632, in which it is changed to *sphere*; possibly as more intelligible. " Out of thy *star*," probably means, placed above thee in destiny. We have "fortune's *star*" in a former scene. In the Letter written to hoax Malvolio we have, " in my *stars* I am above thee."

[21] " The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find—

' Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.' " *Warburton.*

[22] So the folio. The quartos have *mourn.*

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together,
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does[a], indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, *reading.*

Queen. But look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away;
I'll board[23] him presently:—O, give me leave.—

[*Exeunt* KING, QUEEN, *and* Attendants.

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy[b].

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten[c] thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion[24],——Have you a daughter?

[a] The folio prints *ha's.*

[23] i. e. *accost, address him.* See Twelfth Night, Act i. Sc. 3.

[b] *God-'a-mercy* here responds to the French phrase *grand-merci.*

[c] Thus all the quartos. The folio has "*two* thousand."

[24] *Being a god, kissing carrion.* The old copies read, "being a

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i'the sun: conception is a blessing; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Aside.*] Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger: He is far gone, far gone: and, truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read[25], my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue[26] says

good kissing carrion," out of which several vain endeavours have been made to extract a sense. Warburton made the correction, with which Johnson was delighted. The sense is evidently: "for if the sun, being a god, breed maggots in a dead dog, let not your daughter walk in the sun:—(i. e. let her not be exposed to corrupting influences:) conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive." I cannot think with Coleridge that there is any reference to Polonius himself, or that a meaning can be made of "a dead dog" being a "good kissing carrion!" Warburton pointed out the same kind of expression in Cymbeline. "Exposing it to the greedy touch of *common-kissing* Titan:" and Malone has adduced the following passage from the play of K. Edward III. in confirmation of this reading:—

"The freshest *summer's day* doth soonest taint
The loathed *carrion* that it seems to kiss."

Warburton endeavours to prove that Shakespeare intended the passage as a vindication of the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world. He observes that Shakespeare "had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but what they *think*." There was certainly much ingenuity in the emendation (which is unquestionably right) as well as in the argument, but the latter appears totally irrelevant and strained, and certainly was rather intended to show the skill and ingenuity of the critic than to raise the character of the poet, or display his *true* meaning.

[25] The folio has, "the matter that you *mean*;" and in the next line *slave* instead of *rogue*.

[26] By *the satirical rogue*, Warburton will have it that Shake-

here, that old men have gray beards: that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: All which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in't. [*Aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. [*Aside.*]—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you[27].

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life[a].

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir! [*To* POLONIUS.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Guil. My honour'd lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!—

speare means Juvenal, and refers to a passage on old age in his tenth satire. Dr. Farmer states that there was a translation of that satire by Sir John Beaumont, but is uncertain whether it was printed in Shakespeare's time. The defects of age were, however, a common topic of moral reflection.

[27] This speech is abridged thus in the quartos:—"I will leave him and my daughter. My lord, I will take my leave of you."

[a] The repetitions of "except my life" are not in the folio

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near: But your news is not true[28]. [Let me question more in particular: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the

[28] All within crotchets is wanting in the quarto copies.

very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream[29].

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows: Shall we to the court? for, by my fay[30], I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.] But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore[31]?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

[29] Shakespeare has accidentally inverted the expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is σκιᾶς ὄναρ, the dream of a shadow. Thus also Sir John Davies:—

"Man's life is but a dreame, nay, less than so,
A shadow of a dreame."

And Lord Sterline, in his Darius, 1603:—

"Whose best was but *the shadow of a dream.*"

These passages remind me of a beautiful thought in George Chapman's Poem on the Death of Prince Henry, which I have cited elsewhere:—

"O God, what doth not one short hour snatch up
Of all man's gloss?—Still overflows the cup
Of his burst cares; put with no nerves together,
And lighter than *the shadow of a feather.*"

[30] i. e. *by my faith.* See note on the Induction to Taming of a Shrew, p. 128.

[31] i. e. what *do* you. See note on Love's Labour's Lost, Act iv Sc. 3.

Ham. Any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you? [*To* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you[32]; [*Aside.*] —if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily[33] with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire[34], why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how ex-

[32] To *have an eye of any one* is to *have an inkling of his purpose*, or *to be aware of what he is about*. The first quarto has:—"Nay, then I see how the wind sets."

[33] The folio misprints *heavenly* for *heavily*, and omits the word *firmament* occurring below.

[34] "Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patins of bright gold."
Merchant of Venice.

press and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me, no nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, "Man delights not me?"

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten[35] entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted[36] them on the way; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king, shall be welcome, his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace: [the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere[37];] and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. —What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

[35] i. e. *short and spare.* See Twelfth Night, Act i. Sc. 5, p. 364, note 3.

[36] To *cote* is to *pass alongside*, to *pass by*:—

"Marry, presently *coted* and outstript them."

Return from Parnassus.

"With that Hippomenes *coted* her."

Golding's Ovid, Metam. ii.

It was a familiar hunting term, and its origin from *à côté*, French, is obvious.

[37] The first quarto reads:—"The clown shall make them laugh that are tickled in the lungs." The words as they now stand are in the folio. The meaning appears to be, the clown shall make even those laugh whose lungs are tickled with a *dry* cough, or huskiness; by his merriment shall convert even their coughing into laughter. The same expression occurs in Howard's Defensative against the Poyson of supposed Prophecies, 1620, folio:—"Discovering the moods and humours of the vulgar sort to be so loose and *tickle of the seare.*"

Ham. How chances it, they travel[38]? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an eyry[39] of children, little eyases[40], that cry out on the top of question[41], and

[38] In the first quarto copy this passage stands thus:—

"*Ham.* How comes it that they travel? do they grow restie?

Gil. No, my lord, their reputation holds as it was wont.

Ham. How then?

Gil. I' faith, my lord, *novelty* carries it away, for the principal publike audience that came to them, are turned to private plays, and to the humour of *children.*"

By this we may understand what Hamlet means in saying "their *inhibition* comes of the late *innovation*," i. e. "their prevention or hindrance comes from the late innovation of *companies of juvenile performers*, as the children of the revels, the children of St. Paul's," &c. They have not relaxed in their endeavours to please, but this (brood) aiery of little children are now the fashion, and have so abused the common stages as to deter many from frequenting them. Thus in Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Pasqui[l] and Catherine, 1601:—

"I sawe the children of Powles last night,
And troth they pleased me prettie prettie well,
The apes in time will do it handsomely.
Pla. I' faith,
I like the audience that frequenteth there
With *much applause:* a man shall not be chokt
With the stench of garlick, nor be pasted
To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.
"*Bra.* 'Tis a good gentle audience, and I hope
The boys will come one day in great request."

[39] i. e. *a brood.* See note on King Richard III. Act i. Sc. 3, p. 414.

[40] i. e. *young nestlings*; properly young unfledged hawks.

[41] *Question* is *speech, conversation.* The meaning may therefore be, they cry out on the top of their voice.

are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages (so they call them), that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What! are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escoted[42]? Will they pursue the quality[43], no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players (as it is most like, if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre[44] them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too[45].

[42] i. e. *paid*, from the Fr. *escot*, a shot or reckoning.

[43] *Quality*, i. e. *profession*. Mr. Gifford has remarked that "this word seems more peculiarly appropriated to the profession of a player by our old writers." But in Measure for Measure, Angelo, when the *Bawd* and *Tapster* are brought before him, inquires what *quality* they are of. In the Two Gentlemen of Verona, the *Outlaws* speak of men of our *quality*. And Sir Thomas Eliot, in his Platonic Dialogue, 1534:—"According to the *profession* or *qualitee*, wherein men have opinion that wisdome doth rest, so ought to be the forme of livinge, countenance, and gesture." He is speaking of *philosophers*.

No longer than they can sing, i. e. *no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir.*

[44] i. e. *set them on*, a phrase borrowed from the setting on a dog. Thus in King John, Act iv. Sc. 1:—

"Like a dog that is compelled to fight,
Snatch at his master that doth *tarre* him on."

[45] i. e. *carry all the world before them*: there is perhaps an allu

Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those, that would make mowes[46] at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of Trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply[47] with you in this garb; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are wel-

sion to the *Globe* theatre, the sign of which is said to have been Hercules carrying the globe.

[46] So the folio. First quarto, *mops and moes.*" The other quartos *mouths.*

[47] *Let me comply with you in this garb.* Hanmer, with his usual temerity, changed *comply* to *compliment*, and Steevens has contented himself with saying that he means "to *compliment* with," here and in a passage in the fifth act, "He did *comply with* his dug before he sucked it," where that sense would be even more absurd. Hamlet has received his old schoolfellows with somewhat of the coldness of suspicion hitherto, but he now remembers that this is not courteous: He therefore rouses himself to give them a proper reception, "Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore.— *Your hands.* Come then, the appurtenance of welcome is *fashion* and *ceremony*: let me EMBRACE you in this *fashion*. lest I should seem to give you a less courteous reception than I give the players, to whom I must behave with at least exterior politeness." That to *comply with* was to *embrace* will appear from the following passages in Herrick:—

"Witty Ovid, by
Whom fair Corinna sits, and doth *comply*,
With iv'ry wrists, his laureat head, and steeps
His eye in dew of kisses, while he sleeps."

Again:—

"A rug of carded wool
Which, sponge-like, drinking in the dull
Light of the moon, seem'd to *comply*,
Cloud-like the dainty deity."

come: but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw[48].

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Haply, he's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy: he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you; When Roscius was an actor in Rome,——

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour,——

Ham. "Then came each actor on his ass,"——

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral [tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral][49], scene individable, or poem unlimited: —Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ[50] and the liberty,—these are the only men.

[48] The original form of this proverb was undoubtedly "To know a hawk from a *hernshaw*," that is, to know a hawk from the *heron* which it pursues. There is an old Italian proverb: "Saper discerner i Tordi da Stornelli," for to know one thing from another. The corruption is said to be as old as the time of Shakespeare.

[49] The words within crotchets are not in the quartos, except the first of 1603.

[50] The quarto of 1603 reads, "for the law *hath* writ." The

Ham. "O Jephthah, judge of Israel,"—what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why—"One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well"[51].

Pol. Still on my daughter. [*Aside.*

Ham. Am I not i'the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why, "As by lot, God wot," and then, you know, "It came to pass, As most like it was,"—The first row of the pious chanson[52] will show you more; for look, where my abridgment[53] comes.

Enter Four or Five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all:—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanc'd[54] since I saw thee last; Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark?—What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your lady-

sense intended is evidently that the players could adhere to the part written for them, or depart from it and extemporize.

[51] An imperfect copy of this ballad, of "Jephtha, Judge of Israel," was given to Dr. Percy by Steevens. See Reliques, ed. 1794, vol. i. p. 189. There is a more correct copy in Evans's Old Ballads, vol. i. p. 7, ed. 1810.

[52] *Pons chanson* is the reading of the first folio; three of the quartos read *pious;* and the newly discovered quarto of 1603, "*the godly ballad;*" which puts an end to controversy upon the subject. The *first row* is the first column. The form of these old carols and ballads is well known.

[53] The folio reads, "abridgments come." *Abridgment* was used to signify a dramatic performance, as in Midsummer Night's Dream, Act v. Sc. 1:—

"Say what *abridgment* have you for this evening."

Hamlet has afterwards termed the players, "the *abstracts* and brief chronicles of the time."

[54] *Valanc'd*, i. e. *fringed with a beard.* The folio misprints it *valiant.*

ship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine[55]. 'Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring[56].—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight: Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play.* What speech, my lord?

[55] A *chopine*, a kind of *high shoe*, or rather *clog*, worn by the Spanish and Italian ladies, and adopted at one time as a fashion by the English. Coriate describes those worn by the Venetians as some of them "half a yard high." Bulwer, in his Artificial Changeling, complains of this fashion, as a monstrous affectation, "wherein our ladies imitate the Venetian and Persian ladies." That the fashion was originally of oriental origin seems very probable: there is a figure of a Turkish lady with *chopines* in Sandy's Travels; and another of a Venetian courtesan in the Habiti Antichi, &c. di Cesare Vecellio. The annexed cut is reduced from one in Mr. Douce's Illustrations, copied from a real Venetian chopine.



Chapin is the Spanish name; and Cobarruvias countenances honest Tom Coriate's account of the preposterous height to which some ladies carried them. He tells an old tale of their being invented to prevent women's gadding, being first made of *wood*, and very heavy; and that the ingenuity of the women overcame this inconvenience by substituting *cork*. Though they are mentioned under the name of *cioppini* by those who saw them in use in Venice, the dictionaries record them under the title of *zoccoli*. Cobarruvias asserts that they were made of *zapino* (deal) in Italy, and not of cork; and hence their name. But the Spanish doctors differ about the etymology. Perhaps Hamlet may have some allusion to the *boy* having grown so as to fill the place of a tragedy heroine, and so assumed the *cothurnus;* which Puttenham described as "high corked shoes, or pantofles, which now they call in Spaine and Italy *shoppini*."

[56] The old gold coin was thin and liable to crack. There was a *ring* or circle on it, within which the sovereign's head, &c. was placed; if the crack extended beyond this ring, it was rendered uncurrent: it was therefore a simile applied to any other debased or injured object. There is some humour in applying it to *a cracked voice.*

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million[57]; 'twas caviare to the general[58]: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgements, in such matters, cried in the top of mine), an excellent play: well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets in the lines[59], to make the matter savoury: nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affectation[60]; but called it, an honest method, [as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more hand-

[57] The quarto of 1603 reads *vulgar.*

[58] "'Twas *caviare* to the *general.*" *Caviare* is said to be the pickled roes of certain fish of the sturgeon kind, called in Italy *caviale*, and much used there and in other Catholic countries. Great quantities were prepared on the river Volga formerly. As a dish of high seasoning and peculiar flavour it was not relished by the *many*, i. e. the *general.* A fantastic fellow, described in Jonson's Cynthia's Revels, is said to be learning to eat macaroni, periwinkles, French beans, and *caviare*, and pretending to like them.

[59] Thus the old copy. Pope reads *salt*, which was probably intended. "Sal. *Salte*, a pleasante and mery word, that maketh folke to laugh, and sometimes pricketh."—*Baret.*

[60] The poet has probably put into the mouth of Hamlet his own genuine opinion of this speech, and the play from whence it was derived; whether it was one of his own juvenile performances, or one of those inform dramas which he had polished, it is now vain to inquire. There are words and passages which were evidently coined in his mint.

Schlegel considers it as one example of the many niceties of Shakespeare which have never been understood. He observes, that "this speech must not be judged by itself, but in connexion with the place where it is introduced. To distinguish it as dramatic poetry in the play itself, it was necessary that it should rise above the dignified poetry of that in the same proportion that the theatrical elevation does above simple nature. Hence Shakespeare has composed the play in Hamlet altogether in sententious rhymes, full of antithesis. But this solemn and measured tone did not suit a speech in which violent emotion ought to prevail; and the poet had no other expedient than the one of which he made use, overcharging the pathos."

some than fine.][61] One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;—

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,"
—'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.
"The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble,
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now his[a] dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd[62]
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
To their lord's murder[63]: Roasted in wrath, and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks;"—So proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. "Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash

[61] The words in brackets are not in the folio.

[a] The old copies have *this*.

[62] *Gules*, i. e. *red*, in the language of heraldry: to *trick* is to colour.

"With man's blood *paint* the ground; *gules, gules.*"
Timon of Athens

[63] The folio has "vile murders."

Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack[64] stand still,
The bold winds speechless[65], and the orb below
As hush as death: anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
'Pr'ythee, say on:—He's for a jig[66], or a tale of bawdry,

[64] The *rack* is the *clouds*, formed by vaporous exhalation. Johnson has chosen this passage and one in Dryden of the same import to exemplify the word which he explains, "the clouds *as they are driven by the winds.*"

[65] "Even as the *wind is hush'd before it raineth.*"
Venus and Adonis.

[66] "He's for a *jig* or a tale of bawdry." *Giga*, in Italian, was a fiddle, or crowd; *gigaro*, a fiddler, or minstrel. Hence a *jig* (first written *gigge*, though pronounced with *g* soft, after the Italian), was a ballad, or ditty, sung to the fiddle. "Frottola, a countrie *gigge*, or round, or country song or wanton verse." As these itinerant minstrels proceeded, they made it a kind of farcical dialogue; and at length it came to signify a short merry interlude:—"Farce, the *jigg* at the end of an enterlude, wherein some pretie knaverie is acted." There are several of the old bal-

or he sleeps:—say on: come to Hecuba.

1 Play. "But who, O! who, had seen the mobled[67] queen"——

Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 Play. "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
With bisson[68] rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamour that she made
(Unless things mortal move them not at all),
Would have made milch[69] the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods."

lads and dialogues called *Jigs* in the Harleian Collection. Thus also in The Fatal Contract, by Hemings:—

"We'll hear your *jigg*,
How is your *ballad* titled."

[67] The folio reads *inobled*, an evident error of the press; for *mobled*, which means *muffled*. The queen is represented with "a clout upon her head and a blanket wrapt round her, caught up in the alarm of fear." We have the word in Ogilby's Fables:—

"*Mobbled* nine days in my considering cap."

And in Shirley's Gentleman of Venice:—

"The moon doth *mobble* up herself."

[68] *Bisson* is *blind*; bլɼen, A. S. *Bisson rheum* is therefore *blinding tears*. In Coriolanus we have, "*Bisson* conspecuities."

[69] "Would have made *milch* the burning eye of heaven." By a hardy poetical license this expression means, "Would have *filled with tears* the burning eye of heaven." We have "Lemosus, *milch*-hearted," in Huloet's and in Lyttleton's Dictionaries; and Eliot renders *lemosi* "those that weepe lightly." It is remarkable that, in old Italian, lattuoso is used for luttuoso, in the same metaphorical manner. To have "made *passion* in the gods" would have been to move them to *sympathy* or *compassion*.

Pol. Look, whether he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes[70].—'Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstracts, and brief chronicles, of the time: After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodikins, man, much better: Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

[*Exit* POLONIUS, *with some of the* Players.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

[70] "The plays of Shakespeare, by their own power, must have given a different turn to acting, and almost new-created the performers of his age. Mysteries, moralities, and interludes afforded no materials for art to work on, no discriminations of character, or varieties of appropriated language. From tragedies like Cambyses, Tamburlaine, and Jeronymo, nature was wholly banished; and the comedies of Gammer Gurton, Comon Condycyons, and The Old Wives Tale, might have had justice done to them by the lowest order of human beings.

"Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ, was wanting when the dramas of Shakespeare made their first appearance; and to these we were certainly indebted for the excellent actors who could never have improved so long as their sensibilities were unawakened, their memories burthened only by pedantic or puritanical declamation, and their manners vulgarised by pleasantry of as low an origin."—*Steevens.*

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* Player.] My good friends [*To* Ros. *and* GUIL.] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. Ay, so, God b' wi' you:—Now I am alone.
O what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working, all his visage wann'd[71];
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue[72] for passion,
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

[71] The folio reads *warm'd*, which reading Steevens contended for: he was probably moved by a spirit of opposition; for surely no one can doubt, who considers the context, that *wann'd* is the poet's word. Indeed I question whether *his visage warm'd*, for *his face suffused*, would have entered into the mind of a writer, or the comprehension of a reader or auditor in Shakespeare's time.

[72] i. e. the *hint* or *prompt word*, a technical phrase among players; literally in French the *tail*, or last words of the preceding speech, which the actor learns with his own, and watches for as the sign to come in. "A prompter," says Florio, "one who keepes the booke for the plaiers, and teacheth them, or schollers their *kue*." This will explain why it is used in other places, as in Othello, in the same sense:—

> "Were it my *cue* to fight, I should have known it
> Without a *prompter*."

Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak[a],
Like John a-dreams[73], unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat[74] was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
Why, I should take it: for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless[75] villain!
O vengeance!
Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd[76],

[a] To *peak*, is to *mope*, to *act childishly, foolishly, and with irresolution.* So in The Wild-Goose Chase of Beaumont and Fletcher, Act iv. Sc. 3:—"Why stand'st thou here then,
Sneaking and *peaking*, as thou would'st steal linen?
Hast thou not place and time?"

[73] *John a-dreams*, or *John a droynes*, was a common term for any *dreaming* or *droning* simpleton. There is a story told of one *John a droynes*, a Suffolk simpleton, who played the Devil in a stage play, in the Hundred Merry Tales. And there is another foolish character of that name in Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra. A corresponding term *John a nods* is used by Harsnet in his Declaration of Popish Impostures, p. 160. *Unpregnant* is not quickened or properly impressed with.

[74] *Defeat* here signifies *destruction.* It was frequently used in the sense of *undo* or *take away* by our old writers. Thus Chapman in his Revenge for Honour:—
"That he might meantime make a sure *defeat*
On our good aged father's life."

[75] *Kindless* is *unnatural;* we have *kindly* for *natural*, i. e. *accordance with kind*, elsewhere.

[76] The first folio reads thus:—

Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a cursing like a very drab,
A scullion!
Fye upon't! foh! About my brains[77]! Humph! I
have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play[78],
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father,
Before mine uncle; I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him[79] to the quick; if he but blench[80],
I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
May be a devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy

"Oh vengeance!
Who? What an ass am I? I sure this is most brave,
That I the sonne of *the Deere* murthered."

The quarto of 1604 omits "Oh vengeance," and reads, "*a* deere murthered." The quarto of 1603, "that I the son of my dear father."

[77] It seems extraordinary that Mason and Steevens could ever conceive that there was any allusion here to the nautical phrase, *about ship*. "*About* my brains" is nothing more than "*to work* my brains." The common phrase, to go *about* a thing, is not yet obsolete. Falstaff humours the equivocal use of the word in The Merry Wives of Windsor:—"No quips now, Pistol; indeed I am in the waist too yards about; but I am now *about* no waste; I am *about* thrift." Steevens's quotation from Heywood's Iron Age should have taught him better:—

"*My brain about* again! for thou hast found
New projects now to work on."

[78] A number of instances of the kind are collected by Thomas Heywood in his Apology for Actors.

[79] To *tent* was to *probe*, to *search a wound*.

[80] To *blench* is to *shrink* or *start*. Vide Winter's Tale, Act i. Sc. 2, p. 22.

(As he is very potent with such spirits),
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
More relative[81] than this: The play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King.

AND can you, by no drift of conference[1]
Get from him why he puts on this confusion;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply[2].

[81] i. e. *more near, more immediately connected.* The first quarto reads, "I will have sounder proofs."

[1] The folio has *circumstance.*

[2] Warburton thought we should read:—

"Most free of question; but of our demands
Niggard in his reply.

And the conjecture is strongly confirmed by the 4to 1603:—

"But still he put us off, and by no means
Would make an answer to that we exposde."

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught[3] on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: They are about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront[4] Ophelia:
Her father, and myself (lawful espials[5]),
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If 't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.—
And, for your part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause

[3] i. e. *reached, overtook.*

[4] i. e. *meet* her, *encounter* her; *affrontare*, Ital. See Winter's Tale, Act v. Sc. 1, vol. iv. p. 108.

[5] *Lawful espials*; that is, lawful *spies.* "An *espiall* in warres, a scoutwatche, a *beholder*, a viewer."—*Baret.* See King Henry VI. Part I. Act i. Sc. 4, p. 26 An *espy* was also in use for a *spy* The two words are only found in the folio.

Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* Queen.

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here:—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow[6] ourselves:—Read on this book;

[*To* OPHELIA.

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness[7].—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much prov'd,—that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action[a], we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden! [*Aside.*

Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt* King *and* POLONIUS.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question:—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;
Or to take arms against a sea[8] of troubles,

[6] *Bestow ourselves*, is here used for *hide* or *place* ourselves. We have the word in the same sense in a subsequent scene:—

"Where the dead body is *bestow'd*, my lord,
We cannot get from him."

We now use *stow*. One of our old dictionaries makes a discrimination between the acceptations of this word, thus:—"To *bestow* or *lay out*; to *bestow*, or *give*; to *bestow*, or *place*."

[7] The quarto has *lowliness*.

[a] This indicates that it was a book of prayers, which agrees with Hamlet's "Nymph in thy orisons."

[8] Thus the old copies. Pope proposed to read *a siege*, and War-

And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,—
No more;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream;—ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil[9],
Must give us pause. There's the respect[10],
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time[11],

burton, *assail.* That the word was *assay*, which was easily mistaken for *a sea*, and which was used in the same sense as *assail*, I have no doubt. Thus in the first part of King Henry IV. Act v. Sc. 4.

"I will *assay* thee so defend thyself."

And in Act ii. Sc. 2 of this play:—

"To give *th'assay* of arms against your majesty."

Numerous instances might be adduced of the use of the word in this sense in the poet's time. Thus:—

"Yf Bevis of Hampton, Colburne & Guy
Will thee *assaye*, set not by them a flye."

A New Enterlude called Thersites.

[9] *This mortal coil*; that is, "the tumult and bustle of this life." It is remarkable that under *garbuglio*, which has the same meaning in Italian as our *coil*, Florio has "a pecke of troubles;" of which Shakespeare's "sea of troubles" may be only an aggrandized idea.

[10] i. e. the *consideration.* This is Shakespeare's most usual sense of the word.

[11] *Time*, for *the time*, is a very usual expression with our old writers. Thus in Ben Jonson's Every Man out of his Humour:

"Oh, how I hate the monstrousness *of time.*"

In Cardanus' Comforte by Thomas Bedingfield, 1599, is a description of the miseries of life strongly resembling that in the text:—"Hunger, thirste, sleape not plentiful or quiet as deade men have, heate in somer, colde in winter, *disorder of tyme*, terroure of warres, controlment of parents, cares of wedlocke, studye for children, slouthe of servaunts, *contention of sutes*, and that which is most of all, *the condycyon of tyme* wherein *honestye is disdayned* as folye, and crafte is honoured as wisdome."

In the 4to, 1603, this soliloquy occurs in an earlier scene, and is immediately preceded by the king's remark "See where he comes poring upon a book." The poet therefore meant it as re-

Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely[12],
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus[13] make
With a bare bodkin[14]? who would fardels[15] bear,
To grunt[16] and sweat under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn[17]
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all[18];

flections upon what he had been reading, and Mr. Hunter thinks from some *other* passages which he cites that this very book of *Cardanus' Comforte* was in Shakespeare's mind, and by him placed in the hands of Hamlet. The book was first published in 1573.

[12] The folio has "the *poor* man's contumely," and in the next line the quartos have *despised.*

[13] The allusion is to the term *quietus est*, used in settling accounts at exchequer audits. Thus Webster in his Dutchess of Malfy:—

"You had the trick in audit time to be sick,
Till I had sign'd your *quietus.*"

And more appositely, in Sir Thomas Overbury's character of *a Franklin*:—"Lastly to *end* him, he cares not when his end comes; he needs not feare his audit, for his *quietus* is in heaven."

[14] "*Bodkin* was the ancient term for a small dagger." See note 11, p. 232.

[15] *Fardels*, i. e. *packs*, *burdens.* The folio has "*these* fardels."

[16] Though *to grunt* has been degraded in modern language, it appears to have conveyed no vulgar or low image to the ear of our ancestors, as many quotations from the old translations of the classics would show. "Loke that the places about thee be so in silence that thy corage and mynde *gronte* nor groudge nat." *Paynel's Translation of Erasmus de Contempt. Mundi.* The fact seems to be, that to *groan* and to *grunt* were convertible terms. "Swyne wode for love *groyneth.*"—*Horman's Vulgaria.* And Chaucer in the Monk's Tale:—

"But never *gront* he at no stroke but on."

[17] Mr. Douce points out the following passages in Cranmer's Bible, which may have been in Shakespeare's mind:—"Afore I goe thither, *from whence I shall not turne againe*, even to the lande

And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprizes of great pith[19] and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry[20],
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
The fair Ophelia:—Nymph, in thy orisons[21]
Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you now receive them.

Ham. No, not I[a];
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well, you did:
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.

of darkness, and shadowe of death; yea into that darke cloudie lande and deadly shadow whereas is no order, but terrible feare as in the darknesse."—*Job* x. "The way that I must goe is at hande, but *whence I shall not turne againe*."—*Ib.* xvi.

"Weep not for Mortimer,
That scorns the world, and as a *traveller*
Goes to *discover countries yet unknown*."
Marlowe's King Edward II.

[18] "I'll not meddle with it,—*it makes a man a coward*."—*King Richard III.* Act i. Sc. 4. And again:—

"O *coward conscience*, how dost thou afflict me."
Ib. Act v. Sc. 3

[19] The quartos have *pitch*.

[20] The folio has *away*.

[21] "This is a touch of nature. Hamlet at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect that he is to personate madness, but makes an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts."—*Johnson*.

[a] The folio has "No, no," and in the next line "*I* know." Two lines lower it misprints *then* for *their*, and *left* for *lost*.

There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty[22].

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness; this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; Why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in[23], imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven! We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

[22] The meaning appears to be that "honesty may be corrupted by flattering discourse addressed to beauty." Hamlet remarks respecting women generally. The first quarto reads:—"Your beauty should admit no discourse to your honesty." That of 1604:—"You should admit no discourse to your beauty."

[23] "Than I have thoughts *to put them in.*" To put "a thing into thought" is "to think on it."

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where[24] but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell[25]: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings[26] too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance[27]; Go to; I'll no more of it: it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit* HAMLET.

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's eye, tongue, sword[28]:
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form[29],
The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,

[24] The folio has *way*.

[25] The folio has "*Go*, farewell."

[26] The folio, "for *paintings* has *prattlings*; and for *face* has *pace*.

[27] "You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*."

[28] The words soldier's and scholar's are transposed in the folios, but the 4to, 1603, authorises the necessary change.

[29] "Speculum consuetudinis."—*Cicero*. The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves.

Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune[30] and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy[31]: O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King *and* Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose[32],
Will be some danger: Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: But yet, do I believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?

[30] "What is meant by *jangled*," says Mr. Hunter, "will appear from what Joshua Poole says in his Lines addressed to his Scholars prefixed to his English Parnassus, 1657:

"Though whetstones cannot cut at all, they may
Do service, and make knives as sharp as they,
Themselves are blunt; and they who cannot ring
By *jangling* may toll better ringers in."

[31] *Ecstasy*, i. e. *alienation of mind.* Vide the Tempest, Act iii. Sc. 3.

[32] To *disclose* was the ancient term for *hatching* birds of any kind; from the French, *esclos*, and that from the Latin, *exclusus*. I believe to *exclude* is now the technical term. Thus in the Boke of St. Albans, ed. 1496:—"For to speke of hawkes; Fyrst they ben egges, and afterwarde they ben *dysclosed* hawkys." And "comynly goshawkes ben *disclosyd* assoone as the choughs."

You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his griefs; let her be round[33] with him,
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference: If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him, where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Hall in the same.*

Enter HAMLET, *and certain* Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines[1]. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O! it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings[2]: who, for the most

[33] See note 19 on Act ii. Sc. 2, p. 181.

[1] "Have you never seen a stalking stamping player, that will *raise a tempest with his tongue*, and thunder with his heels."—*The Puritan*, a Comedy. The first quarto has, "I'd rather hear a town-bull bellow, than such a fellow speak my lines."

[2] The first quarto reads, "of the *ignorant*." Our ancient theatres were far from the commodious elegant structures which later times have seen. The *pit* was, truly what its name denotes, an unfloored space in the area of the house, sunk considerably beneath the level of the stage; and, by ancient representations, one may judge that it was necessary to elevate the head very much

part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise: I would[a] have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant[3]; it out-herods Herod: 'Pray you, avoid it.

to get a view of the performance. Hence this part of the audience were called *groundlings*. Jonson, in the Induction to Bartholomew Fair, calls them "the *understanding* gentlemen of the *ground*;" and Shirley, "grave *understanders*."

"No shows, no dance, and what you most delight in,
Grave *understanders*, here's no target-fighting."

Sir W. Cornwallis calls the ignorant *earthlings*. "I have not been ashamed to adventure mine eares with a ballad-singer,—the profit to see *earthlings* satisfied with such coarse stuffe," &c.—*Essay* 15, ed. 1623.

[a] The folio has *could*.

[3] *Termagaunt* is the name given in old romances to the tempestuous god of the Saracens. He is usually joined with *Mahound* or Mahomet. Hall mentions him in his first Satire:—

"Nor fright the reader with the Pagan vaunt
Of mighty *Mahound* and great *Termagaunt*."

Dr. Percy and Dr. Johnson, misled by the etymology given by Junius, have made a Saracen divinity of Termagant; and Mr. Gifford inclines to this opinion in a note on Massinger's Renegado, Act i. Sc. 1. It appears more probable that our old writers borrowed it from the *Tervagant* of the French, or the *Trivigante* of the Italian Romances. A learned foreigner has said "*Trivigante*, whom the predecessors of Ariosto always couple with *Appolino*, is really Diana Trivia, the sister of the classical Apollo, whose worship, and the lunar sacrifices which it demanded, had been always preserved among the Scythians." *Quarterly Review* vol. xxi. p. 515.—May we not rather imagine that the Hermes Trismegistus is the deity meant; for Trimegisto and Termegisto are also names of this Termagaunt?

Davenant has given the same etymology of Termagant, *Ter magnus*, i. e. Τρισμέγιστος. And resolute John Florio calls him "*Termigisto*, a great boaster, quarreller, killer, tamer or ruler of the universe; the child of the earthquake and of the thunder, the brother of death."—*World of Words*, 1611. Hence this personage was introduced into the old mysteries and moralities as a demon of outrageous and violent demeanour; or as Bale says, "*Termagauntes* altogether, and very devils incarnate:" and again, "this terrible *Termagaunt*, this Nero, this Pharaoh." A tyrant was always "a part to tear a cat in."—The murder of the innocents was a favourite subject for a mystery; and wherever Herod is introduced, he plays the part of a vaunting braggart, a tyrant of tyrants, and does indeed *outdo Termagant*.

1 *Play.* I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action: with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O! there be players, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man[4], have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play.* I hope, we have reform'd that indifferently with us, Sir.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question[5] of the play be then to be considered: that's

[4] The folio has *Norman.* The quarto, 1603, "the gait of Christian, Pagan, or *Turk*;" which made Farmer suppose that *Mussulman* was intended.

[5] The quarto, 1603, "*Point* in the play then to be *observed.*" Afterwards is added, "And then you have some again that keeps one suit of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel; and gentlemen quote his jests down in their tables before they come to the play, as thus:—*Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge;* and *you owe me a quarter's wages;* and *your beer is sour;* and blab

villainous; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

[*Exeunt* Players.

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.—

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. We will, my lord.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. What, ho; Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,——

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp;
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning[6]. Dost thou hear?

bering with his lips: And thus keeping in his cinque a pace of jests; when, God knows, the warme Clown cannot make a jest unless by chance, as the blind man catcheth a hare: Masters, tell him of it."—This passage was evidently levelled at the particular folly of some injudicious player contemporary with the poet.

[6] Thus the quartos. The folio has *faining*. Two lines above it has *like* for *lick*, and in the next line "*my* choice" for "*her* choice."

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish; her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
(As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;)
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and bless'd are those,
Whose blood and judgement are so well co-mingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul[7]
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy[8]. Give him heedful note:
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face[9];
And, after, we will both our judgements join
In censure[10] of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:

[7] Here the folio reads, "*my* soul," which Mr. Knight and Mr. Collier both follow and defend.

[8] *Vulcan's stithy* is Vulcan's workshop or smithy; *stith* being an *anvil.*

[9] Here the first quarto has:—

"And if he do not blench and change at that,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
Horatio, have a care, observe him well.
Hor. My lord, mine eyes shall still be on his face,
And not the smallest alteration
That shall appear in him, but I shall note it."

[10] i. e. *judgement, opinion.* The folio has "*To* censure."

If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

Danish March. A Flourish. Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and Others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-cramm'd; You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—My lord, you play'd once i' the university, you say? [*To* POLONIUS.

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i' the Capitol; Brutus kill'd me[11].

Ham. It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay[12] upon your patience.

[11] A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar's death was performed at Christ Church, in Oxford, in 1582. Malone thinks that there was an English play on the same subject previous to Shakespeare's. Cæsar was killed in *Pompey's portico*, and not in the Capitol: but the error is at least as old as Chaucer's time.

> "This Julius to the *Capitolie* wente
> Upon a day, that he was wont to gon,
> And in the *Capitolie* anon him hente
> This false Brutus and his other soon,
> And sticked him with *bodekins* anon
> With many a wound," &c.
>
> *Chaucer's Monkes Tale*, v. 14621.

I have cited this passage to show that Chaucer uses *bodkin* for *dagger*, like Shakespeare. See p. 208.

[12] i. e. "they *wait* upon your *sufferance* or *will*." Johnson

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? [*To the* King.

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA'S *Feet.*

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O! your only jig-maker[13]. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables[14]. O heavens! die two

would have changed the word to *pleasure;* but Shakespeare has again used it in a similar sense in the Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act iii. Sc. 1:—

"Go, ...
And think my *patience* more than thy desert
Is privilege for thy departure hence."

[13] See note on Act ii. Sc. 2, p. 198. It may here be added that a *jig* sometimes signified a sprightly dance, as at present. In addition to the examples before given, take the following from Ford's Love's Sacrifice:—"O Giacopo! Petrarch was a dunce, Dante a *jig-maker,* Sannazar a goose, and Ariosto a puck-first to me."—Act ii. Sc. 2.

[14] i. e. a dress, ornamented with the rich fur of that name, said to be the skin of the sable martin. By the statute of apparel,

months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then: or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse[15]; whose epitaph is, *For O, for O. the hobby-horse is forgot.*

Trumpets sound. The Dumb Show[16] *follows.*

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly: the Queen embracing him. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a Fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes,

24 Henry VIII. c. 13, it is ordained that none under the degree of an earl may use sables. Bishop, in his Blossoms, 1577, speaking of extravagance, says, that a thousand ducats were sometimes given for a face of *sables*. But Hamlet is meant to use the word equivocally.

[15] This is a line of an old ballad; something like it occurs in Weelke's Madrigals, 1608, No. xx. The *hobby-horse*, whose omission in the morris dance is so pathetically lamented in many of our old dramas, in the very words which Hamlet calls his epitaph, was long a distinguished favourite in the May Games. He was driven from his station by the Puritans, as an impious and Pagan superstition; but restored after the promulgation of the Book of Sports. The *hobby-horse* was formed of a pasteboard horse's head, and probably a light frame made of wicker-work to form the hinder parts; this was fastened round the body of a man, and covered with a footcloth, which nearly reached the ground, and concealed the legs of the performer; who displayed his antic equestrian skill, and performed various juggling tricks, *wigh-hieing* or neighing, to the no small delight of the bystanders.

[16] This dumb show appears to be superfluous, and even incongruous; for as the murder is there circumstantially represented, the King ought to have been struck with it then, without waiting for the dialogue. Mr. Hunter has shown from an old Diary that it was according to the common practice of the Danish theatre.

comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile; but, in the end, accepts his love. [*Exeunt.*

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching *malicho*[17]; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him: Be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark the play.

Pro. *For us, and for our tragedy,*
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King *and a* Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart[18] gone round

[17] *Miching malicho* is *lurking mischief*, or *evil doing.* To *mich*, for to *skulk*, to *lurk*, was an old English verb in common use in Shakespeare's time; and *malicho* or *malhecho, misdeed*, he has borrowed from the Spanish. It is printed in italics in the folios. Many stray words of Spanish and Italian were then affectedly used in common conversation, as we have seen French used in more recent times.

[18] *Cart, car*, or *chariot*, were used indiscriminately for any car-

Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orbed ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite comutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women fear too much, even as they love[20];
And women's fear and love hold quantity
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is siz'd[21], my fear is so.
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant[22] powers their functions leave to do;

riage formerly. Mr. Todd has adduced the following passage from the Comical History of Alphonsus, by R. G. 1599, which, he thinks, Shakespeare meant to burlesque:—

"Thrice ten times Phœbus with his golden beames
Hath compassed the circle of the skie;
Thrice ten times Ceres hath her workemen hir'd,
And fill'd her barnes with fruteful crops of corne,
Since first in priesthood I did lead my life."

[20] This line is omitted in the folio. There appears to have been a line omitted in the quarto which should have rhymed to this. The couplet at the close of this speech is not in the folio.

[21] Cleopatra expresses herself much in the same manner for the loss of Antony:—

"Our *size* of sorrow
Proportion'd to our *cause*, must be *as great*
As that which makes it."

[22] i. e. *active*.

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou——
P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast;
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.
Ham. Wormwood, wormwood. [*Aside.*
P. Queen. The instances[23], that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love;
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
P. King. I do believe, you think what now you speak;
But, what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory[24];
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures[25] with themselves destroy;
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.

[23] *Instances* are *motives.* See note on King Richard III. Act iii. Sc. 2, p. 457.

[24] "But *thought's* the *slave of life.*"—*King Henry IV.* Part 1.

[25] i. e. *their own determinations, what they enact.* The folio has *enactors*

The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons[26] him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,—
Our wills and fates, do so contrary run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's[27] cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now.——

[*To* OPH.

[26] See note on Act i. Sc. 3, p. 153. "This quaint phrase," says Steevens, "*infests* almost every ancient English composition." Why *infests?* Surely it is as forcible and intelligible as many other metaphorical expressions retained in the language. It has been remarked that our ancestors were much better judges of the powers of language than we are. The Latin writers did not scruple to apply their verb *condire* in the same manner.

[27] *Anchor's* for *anchoret's.* Thus in Hall's second Satire, b. iv.—

"*Sit* seven years pining in an *anchor's cheyre,*
To win some patched shreds of minivere."

So little was this archaism understood in 1762, that in a letter from the Hon. C. Yorke to Dr. Birch, about the edition of Lord Bacon's Letters, he says, "I have marked in p. 6 a word blundered in printing: *Anchor* for *Anchoret* or *Anchorite,* (Hermit αναχωρητης.)" This and the preceding line are not in the folio.

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't[28]?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically[29]. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name[30], his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: But what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.—

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus[31], my lord.

[28] The King is represented as having been present at the dumb show, and the wonder is that he allowed the play to proceed.

[29] The first quarto reads, *trapically*. It is evident that a pun was intended.

[30] *Gonzago is the duke's name, his wife, Baptista.* All the old copies read thus. Yet in the dumb show we have, "Enter a *King* and Queen;" and at the end of this speech, "Lucianus, nephew to the king." In the quarto, 1603, the character is a duke throughout the play, and when *king* was to be substituted for *duke*, this passage escaped correction. *Baptista* is never used singly by the Italians, being uniformly compounded with *Giam* and *Giovanni*. It is needless to remark that it is always the name of a man.

[31] The use to which Shakespeare put the *chorus* may be seen

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.

Ham. So you mistake[32] your husbands.—Begin, murderer;—leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come;——

The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds[33] collected,
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magick and dire property,
On wholesome life usurps immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian: You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

in King Henry V. Every motion or puppet-show was accompanied by an *interpreter* or *showman*. Thus in the Two Gentlemen of Verona:—

"O excellent *motion:* O exceeding puppet!
Now will he *interpret* for her."

[32] The quarto, 1603, reads, "So you *must take* your husband," which reading Theobald also proposed; but there seems no reason for departing from the reading of the majority of the old copies. Hamlet puns upon the word *mistake*; "So you *mis-take*, or *take* your husbands *amiss* for better and worse." The word was often thus misused for any thing done wrongfully, and even for privy stealing. In one of Bastard's Epigrams, 1598, cited by Steevens:—

"None that seeth her face and making
Will judge her stol'n but by *mistaking.*"

[33] *Midnight weeds.* Thus in Macbeth:—

"Root of hemlock, *digg'd i' the dark.*"

Ham. What! frighted with false fire[a]!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. Why, let the strucken deer go weep[34],
The hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
Thus runs the world away.—
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk[35] with me), with two provincial roses on my rais'd[36] shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry[37] of players, sir?

Hor. Half a share[38].

Ham. A whole one, ay.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

[a] This speech is omitted in the quartos, except that of 1603.

[34] See note on As You Like It, Act ii. Sc. 1, p. 28.

[35] To *turn Turk* was a familiar phrase for any violent change of condition or character.

[36] *Provincial roses on my rais'd shoes.* The folio has *rac'd*, and the quartos *razd.* Steevens proposed the reading, "*rais'd* shoes." *Provincial* was erroneously changed to *Provençal*, at the suggestion of Warton. Mr. Douce rectified the error by showing that the *Provincial* roses took their name from *Provins*, in Lower Brie, and not from *Provence.* The wearing of enormous *roses* on the shoes was a prevalent folly of the time, of which old full length portraits afford striking examples.

[37] *A cry of players.* It was usual to call a *pack* of hounds a *cry*; from the French *meute* de chiens: it is here humorously applied to a *troop* or *company* of players. It is used again in Coriolanus: Menenius says to the citizens, "You have made good work, you and your *cry.*" In the very curious catalogue of The Companyes of Bestys, given in The Boke of St. Albans, many equally singular terms may be found, which seem to have exercised the wit and ingenuity of our ancestors; as a *thrave* of throshers, a *scull* or *shoal* of monks, &c.

[38] The players were paid not by salaries, but by *shares* or portions of the profit, according to merit. See Malone's Account of the Ancient Theatres, passim.

This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock[39].

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,——

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some musick; come, the recorders[40].—

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike,—he likes it not, perdy[41].
Come, some musick.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,——

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd.

[39] *A very, very—peacock.* The old copies read *paiock*, and *paiocke*. The *peacock* was as proverbially used for a *proud fool* as the *lapwing* for a *silly* one. "Pavoneggiare, to court it, to brave it, to *peacockise* it, to wantonise it, to get up and down fondly, gazing upon himself as a peacocke does."—*Florio, Ital. Dict.* 1598. Theobald proposed to read *paddock*; and in the last scene Hamlet bestows this opprobrious name upon the king. Mr. Blakeway has suggested that we might read *puttock*, which means a base degenerate hawk, a kite; which Shakespeare does indeed contrast with the eagle in Cymbeline, Act i. Sc. 2:—

"I chose an *eagle*, and did avoid a *puttock*."

[40] *The recorders.* See note on A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act i. Sc. 1. It is difficult to settle exactly the form of this instrument: old writers in general make no distinction between a flute, a pipe, and a recorder; but Hawkins has shown clearly, from a passage in Lord Bacon's Natural History, that the flute and the recorder were distinct instruments.

[41] *Perdy* is a corruption of the Italian *per Dio*, or the French *par Dieu*.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir:—pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great afflic tion of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter; My mother, you say,——

Ros. Then thus she says: Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart[a].

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

[a] This word is wanting in the folio.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely[42] but bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but *While the grass grows*,—the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, *with Recorders.*

O! the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with you[43].—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me[44], as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly[45].

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

[42] Thus the quarto. The folio has *freely*, apparently an error for *surely* of the quartos; omits *but*, and has *of* for *upon*.

[43] *To withdraw with you.* Malone added here a stage direction [*Taking Guild. aside.*] Steevens thinks it an answer to a motion Guildenstern had used, for Hamlet to withdraw with him. I think that it means no more than "to draw back with you," to leave that scent or trail. It is a hunting term. like that which follows.

[44] *To recover the wind of me.* This is a term which has been left unexplained. It is borrowed from hunting, as the context shows; and means, to get the animal pursued to run with the wind, that it may not scent the toil or its pursuers. "Observe how the wind is, that you may set the net so as the hare and wind may come together; if the wind be sideways it may do well enough, but never if it blow over the net into the hare's face, for he will scent both it and you at a distance."—*Gentleman's Recreation.*

[45] Hamlet may say with propriety, "I do not well understand that." Perhaps Guildenstern means, "If my duty to the king makes me too bold, my love to you makes me importunate even to rudeness."

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages[46] with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent musick. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak[a]. Why, do you think, I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.

Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

[46] The *ventages* are the *holes of the pipe.* The *stops* means the *mode of stopping those ventages to produce notes.* Malone has made it the "sounds produced." Thus in King Henry V. Prologue:—

"Rumour is a pipe . . . . . .
And of so easy and so plain a *stop.*"

[a] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio omits the word *speak.*

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by —They fool me to the top of my bent[47].—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit* POLONIUS.

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. HOR., *&c.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day[48]
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother,—
O, heart! lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her[49], but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent[50],
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

[47] See note on Act ii. Sc. 2.

[48] The quartos have:—

"And do such business as the *bitter* day
Would quake to look on."

Which is altered in the folio to:—

"And do such *bitter* business," &c.

Mr. Dyce thinks we should read:—

"And do such business as the *better* day
Would quake to look on."

[49] "They are pestilent fellows, they *speak nothing but bodkins.*" —*Return from Parnassus.* In the Aulularia of Plautus a phrase not less singular occurs:—

"*Me.* Quia mitri miseri cerebrum excutiunt,
Tua dicta soror: *lapides loqueris.*" Act ii. Sc. 1.

[50] To *shend* is to *injure*, whether by reproof, blows, or otherwise. Shakespeare generally uses *shent* for reproved, threatened with angry words. "To give his words *seals*" is therefore to carry his punishment beyond *reproof.* The allusion is to the sealing a deed to render it effective. The quarto of 1603:—

"I will speak daggers; those sharp words being spent,
To do her wrong my soul shall ne'er consent."

SCENE III. *A Room in the same.*

Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous, as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is,
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal[1] depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. Guil. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUIL.

[1] The folio reads, "that spirit upon whose *spirit depends* and *rests*."

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras[2] I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; I'll warrant, she'll tax him home;
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet, that some more audience, than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial[3], should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage[4]. Fare you well, my liege;
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

O! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will;
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder

[2] See King Henry IV. Part I. Act ii. Sc. 4.

[3] "Matres omnes filiis
In peccato adjutrices, auxilio in paterna injuria
Solent esse." *Ter. Heaut.* Act v. Sc. 2.

[4] Warburton explains *of vantage*, "by some opportunity of secret observation." I incline to think that, *of vantage*, in Shakespeare's language, is *for advantage*, commodi causa.

That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain th'offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize[5] itself
Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature: and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed[6] soul; that struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
All may be well! [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't; and so he goes to heaven:
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd[7]:
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary[8], not revenge.
He took my father grossly full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush[a] as May;

[5] Mr. Collier's folio suggests *purse*, instead of *prize*.

[6] i. e. *caught as with birdlime*.

[7] *That would be scann'd*, i. e. *that requires consideration*, or *ought to be estimated*.

[8] The quarto reads, *base* and *silly*.

[a] The folio has "as *fresh* as May." "Behold this was the

And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent[9]:
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven:
And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes[10]. My mother stays:
This physick but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

The King *rises and advances.*

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go[11].
[*Exit.*

iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, *fulness of bread*, and abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters."—*Ezekiel* xvi. 49

[9] Shakespeare has used the verb to *hent*, to take, to lay hold on, elsewhere; but the word is here used as a substantive, for *hold* or *opportunity*.

[10] Johnson has justly exclaimed against the horrible nature of this desperate revenge; but the quotations of the commentators from other plays cotemporary with and succeeding this, show that it could not have been so horrifying to the ears of our ancestors. In times of less civilisation, revenge was held almost a sacred duty; and the purpose of the appearance of the ghost in this play is chiefly to excite Hamlet to it. Yet perhaps there is nothing more in it than another constitutional stratagem of Hamlet to find an excuse to himself for deferring action.

[11] The first quarto reads:—

"No king on earth is safe, if God's his foe."

SCENE IV. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter Queen *and* POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him:
Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with;
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here[1].
'Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother.

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not:—withdraw, I hear him coming.

[POLONIUS *hides himself*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother; what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked[2] tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so·

[1] All the old copies read, "I'll *silence* me," except the quarto 1603, which has, "I'll *shrowd* myself behind the arras." There can be no doubt that we should read, as Mr. Hunter suggests, "I'll *sconce*, or *ensconce* me even here." In the Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iii. Sc. 3, we have, "I'll *ensconce* me behind the arras." The circumstance of Polonius hiding himself behind the arras and the manner of his death are found in the old black letter prose Hystory of Hamblett.

[2] So the quartos. The folio has *idle*, probably caught by the compositor from the preceding line.

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And,—'would it were not so!—you are my mother
Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.
Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.
Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!
Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help! help! help!
Ham. How now! a rat? [*Draws.*] Dead, for a ducat, dead.
[HAMLET *makes a pass through the Arras.*
Pol. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain. [*Falls, and dies.*
Queen. O me! what hast thou done?
Ham. Nay, I know not:—Is't the king?
[*Lifts up the Arras, and draws forth* POLONIUS.
Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!
Ham. A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother[4].
Queen. As kill a king!

[4] There is an idle and verbose controversy between Steevens and Malone, whether the poet meant to represent the Queen as guilty or innocent of being accessory to the murder of her husband. Surely there can be no doubt upon the matter. The Queen shows no emotion at the mock play when it is said—

"In second husband let me be accurst,
None wed the second but who kill'd the first"—

and now manifests the surprise of conscious innocence upon the subject. It should also be observed that Hamlet never directly accuses her of any guilty participation in that crime. I am happy to find my opinion, so expressed in December, 1823, confirmed by the newly discovered quarto copy of 1603; in which the Queen in a future speech is made to say:—

"But, as I have a soul, I swear by heaven,
I never knew of this most horrid murder."

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
[*To* POLONIUS.
I took thee for thy betters; take thy fortune:
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.—
Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff:
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there[a]; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O! such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul; and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words. Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act[5].

[a] *Takes off the rose*
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there.

The folio has *makes* instead of *sets*. In Hamlet's preceding speech the quarto has *better* instead of *betters*, but the latter is Shakespeare's idiom, for we have it again in As You Like It. One would think by the ludicrous gravity with which Steevens and Malone take this figurative language in a literal sense, that they were unused to the adventurous metaphors of Shakespeare. Mr. Boswell's note is short and to the purpose. "*Rose* is put generally for the *ornament*, the *grace* of an innocent love." Ophelia describes Hamlet as—

"The expectancy and *rose* of the fair state."

[5] The quarto of 1604 gives this passage thus:—

Queen. Ah me! what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index[6]?

Ham. Look here upon this picture, and on this
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station[7], like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother[8]. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten[9] on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,

"Heaven's face does glow
O'er this solidity and compound mass
With *heated* visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act."

[6] *The index*, or *table of contents*, was formerly placed at the beginning of books. In Othello, Act ii. Sc. 7, we have—"An *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of foul and lustful thoughts."

[7] It is evident from this passage that whole length pictures of the two kings were formerly introduced. *Station* does not mean the spot where any one is placed, but the *act of standing*, the *attitude*. So in Antony and Cleopatra, Act iii. Sc. 3:—

"Her motion and her *station* are as one."

Without this explanation it might be conceived that the compliment designed for the attitude of the King was bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing.

[8] The folio misprints *breath* for *brother*. Here the allusion is to Pharaoh's dream. Genesis, xli.

[9] i. e. *to feed rankly* or *grossly*: it is usually applied to the fattening of animals. Marlowe has it for "to grow fat." *Bat* is the old word for *increase*; whence we have *battle*, *batten*, *batful*.

And waits upon the judgement; And what judgement
Would step from this to this? [Sense[10], sure you have,
Else could you not have motion: But, sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference.] What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind[11]?
[Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope[12].]
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine[13] in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire[14]: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;

[10] *Sense* here is not used for *reason*; but for *sensation*, *feeling* or *perception*: as before in this scene:—

"That it be proof and bulwark against *sense*."

Warburton, misunderstanding the passage, proposed to read *notion* instead of *motion*. The whole passage in brackets is omitted in the folio.

[11] "The hoodwinke play, or *hoodman blind*, in some place, called *blindmanbuf*."—*Baret*. It appears also to have been called blind hob. It is *hob-man blind* in the quarto of 1603.

[12] i. e. *could not be so dull and stupid*.

[13] *Mutine* for *mutiny*. This is the old form of the verb. Shakespeare calls *mutineers mutines* in a subsequent scene; but this is, I believe, peculiar to him: they were called *mutiners* anciently.

[14] Thus in the quarto of 1603:—

"Why appetite with you is in the wane,
Your blood runs backward now from whence it came:
Who'll chide hot blood within a virgin's heart
When lust shall dwell within a matron's breast."

And there I see such black and grained[15] spots
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed[16] bed;
Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty sty;——

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears:
No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain;
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord:—a vice[17] of kings:
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches:—

Enter Ghost[18].

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,

[15] *Grained spots;* that is, *dyed in grain, deeply imbued.*

[16] *Enseamed,* i. e. *rank, gross.* It is a term borrowed from falconry. It is well known that the *seam* of any animal was the fat or tallow; and a hawk was said to be *enseamed* when she was too fat or gross for flight. By some confusion of terms, however, *to enseam a hawk* was used for *to purge her of glut and grease;* by analogy it should have been *unseam.* Beaumont and Fletcher, in The False One, use *inseamed* in the same manner:—

"His lechery *inseamed* upon him.

It should be remarked, that the quarto of 1603 reads *incestuous;* as does that of 1611.

[17] i. e. "The low mimic, the counterfeit, a dizard, or common *vice* and jester, *counterfeiting* the gestures of any man."—*Fleming.* Shakespeare afterwards, calls him *a king of shreds and patches,* alluding to the party-coloured habit of the *vice* or fool in a play.

[18] The first quarto adds, *in his night-gown.*

That, laps'd in time and passion[19], lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit[20] in weakest bodies strongest works;
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th'alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements[21],
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he glares!

[19] *Laps'd in time and passion.* Johnson explains this:—"That having suffered *time* to *slip* and *passion* to *cool*, let's go by," &c. This explanation is confirmed by the quarto of 1603:—

"Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That I thus long have let revenge slip by."

[20] *Conceit* for *conception, imagination.* This was the force of the word among our ancestors. Thus in The Rape of Lucrece:—

"And the *conceited* painter was so nice."

[21] Thus in The Comedy of Errors, "Why is time such a niggard of *hair*, being as it is so plentiful an *excrement?*"

Not only the *hair* of animals having neither life nor sensation was called an *excrement*, but the feathers of birds had the same appellation. Thus in Walton's Complete Angler, ch. i. p. 9, ed. 1766, "the several kinds of fowl . . . with their very *excrements*, afford him a soft lodging at night."

So in Macbeth:—

"My fell of *hair*
Would at a dismal treatise *rouse* and *stir*
As life were in't."

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable[22].—Do not look upon me;
Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
My stern affects[23]: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[*Exit* Ghost.

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy[24]

[22] *Capable* for *susceptible, intelligent,* i. e. *would excite in them capacity to understand.* Thus in King Richard III.—

"O 'tis a parlous boy,
Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, *capable.*"

[23] *My stern affects.* All former editions read, "My stern *effects.*" "*Effects,* for actions, deeds, effected," says Malone! We should certainly read *affects,* i. e. *dispositions, affections of the mind:* as in that disputed passage of Othello:—

"The young *affects* in me defunct."

It is remarkable that we have the same error in Measure for Measure, Act iii. Sc. 1:—

"Thou art not certain,
For thy complexion shifts to strange *effects*
After the moon."

Dr. Johnson saw the error in that play, and proposed to read *affects.* But the present passage has escaped observation. The "piteous action" of the ghost could not alter things already *effected,* but might move Hamlet to a less stern *mood of mind.*

[24] *Ecstasy,* i. e. *any temporary alienation of mind.* See p. 212 ante, note 31, and The Tempest, note 14, end of Act iii. This speech of the queen has the following remarkable variation in the quarto of 1603:—

"Alas, it is the weakness of thy brain
Which makes thy tongue to blazon thy heart's grief:
But as I have a soul, I swear to heaven,

Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick. It is not madness
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue:
For in the fatness of these pursy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
Yea, curb[25] and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O, Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
[That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's evil, is angel yet in this[26];
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,

I never knew of this most horrid murder:
But, Hamlet, this is only fantasy,
And for my love forget these idle fits."

[25] i. e. *bow.* "Courber, Fr. to bow, crook, or curb." Thus in Pierce Plowman:—

"Then I *courbid* on my knees."

[26] This passage is not in the folio. The old copies have, "Of habit's *devill.*" I adopt Dr. Thirlby's emendation, for what sense can be made of *habit's devil?* The old copy indicates clearly the misprint, for the word is here *devill*, while just below and elsewhere it is uniformly *divell* when the evil spirit is meant.

That aptly is put on:] Refrain to-night[27];
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: [[28]the next more easy:
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either curb[29] the devil or throw him out
With wondrous potency.] Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POLONIUS
I do repent: But heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night!—
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
One word more, good lady[30].

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy[31] kisses,

[27] Here the quarto of 1603 has two remarkable lines:—

"And, mother, but assist me in revenge,
And in his death your infamy shall die."

[28] *The next more easy*, &c. This passage, as far as *potency*, is also omitted in the folio.

[29] This passage is only found in the quartos. In that of 1604 this line stands:—

"And either the devil, or throw him out."

The undated quarto, and those of 1611 and 1637, have:—

"And *maister* the devil,"

which destroys the rhythm. Some word appears to have been omitted after either, and Malone substituted *curb*, which occurs in a similar passage in the Merchant of Venice.

[30] *One word more, good lady.* These words are from the quartos.

[31] i. e. *reeky* or *fumant; reekant*, as Florio calls it. The king has been already called the *bloat* king, which hints at his intemperance. In Coriolanus we have the *reechy* neck of a kitchen wench. *Reeky* and *reechy* are the same word, and always applied to any vaporous exhalation, even to the fumes of a dunghill.

Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft[32]. 'Twere good, you let him know;
For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib[33],
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly; and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions[34], in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me[35].

Ham. I must to England[36]; you know that?

Queen. Alack,
I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. [There's letters seal'd: and my two school-fellows[37],—
Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd,—

[32] The hint for Hamlet's feigned madness is taken from the old Historie of Hamblett already mentioned.

[33] For *paddock*, a *toad*, see Macbeth, Act i. Sc. 1: and for *gib*, a *cat*, see King Henry IV. Part i. Act i. Sc. 2.

[34] *To try conclusions* is *to put to proof*, or *try experiments*. See Merchant of Venice, Act ii. Sc. 2. Sir John Suckling possibly alludes to the same story in one of his letters:—"It is the story after all of the jackanapes and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too."

[35] The quarto of 1603 has here another remarkable variation:—
"Hamlet, I vow by that Majesty
That knows our thoughts and looks into our hearts,
I will conceal, consent, and do my best,
What stratagem soe'er thou shalt devise."

[36] The manner in which Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England is not developed. He expresses surprise when the king mentions it in a future scene; but his design of passing for a madman may account for this.

[37] This and the eight following verses are omitted in the folio.

They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar[38]: and't shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.—]
This man shall set me packing.
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room:
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:—
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally;* HAMLET *dragging in* POLONIUS.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The same.*

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King.

THERE'S matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them:
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while[1].—

[*To* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN, *who go out.*

[38] *Hoist* with his own *petar*. *Hoist* for *hoisted*. To *hoyse* was the old verb. A *petar* was a kind of mortar used to blow up gates.

[1] This line does not appear in the folio, in which Guildenstern and Rosencrantz are not brought on the stage here at all.

Ah[2], my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend[3]
Which is the mightier: In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries *A rat! a rat!*
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt[4],
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore,
Among a mineral[5] of metals base,

[2] The quarto reads, "Ah, *mine own* lord."

[3] Thus in Lear:—"He was met e'en now
As mad as the vex'd sea."

[4] *Out of haunt* means *out of company.* "*Frequentia*, a great *haunt* or *company* of folk." Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—
"Dido and her Sichæus shall want troops,
And all the *haunt* be ours."
And in Romeo and Juliet:—
"We talk here in the public *haunt* of men."

[5] Shakespeare, with a license not unusual among his cotemporaries, uses *ore* for *gold*, and *mineral* for *mine*. Bullokar and Blount both define "*or* or *ore*, *gold*; of a golden colour." And the Cambridge Dictionary, 1594, under the Latin word *mineralia*, will show how the English *mineral* came to be used for a mine. Thus also in The Golden Remaines of Hales of Eton, 1693:—"Controversies of the times, like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour nothing is done."

Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him
Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* GUIL.
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: [so, haply, slander,—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank[6],
Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air[7].]—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. —— Safely stowed,—[Ros. *&c. within.*

[6] The *blank* was the *mark* at which shots or arrows were directed. Thus in The Winter's Tale, Act ii. Sc. 3:—
"Out of the *blank* and *level* of my aim."

[7] The passage in brackets is not in the folio. The words "So, haply, slander" are also omitted in the quartos; they were supplied by Theobald. The addition is supported by a passage in Cymbeline:— "No, 'tis *slander*,
Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Out-*venoms* all the worms of Nile, whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth bely
All corners of the world."

Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!] But soft[1]!—what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence, And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities[2]. But such officers do the king best service in the end: He keeps them, like an ape doth nuts[3], in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed to be last swallowed: When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again[4].

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

[1] *But soft!* these two words are not in the folio.

[2] Here the quarto 1603 inserts, "that makes his liberality your storehouse, but," &c.

[3] The omission of the words "*doth nuts*," in the old copies, had obscured this passage. Dr. Farmer proposed to read "like an *ape* an *apple*." The words are now supplied from the newly discovered quarto of 1603.

[4] "He's but a *spunge*, and shortly needs must leese,
His wrong got juice, when greatness' fist shall *squeese*
His liquor out." *Marston*, Sat. vii.

Ham. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body[5]. The king is a thing——

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after[6]. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter King, *attended.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, th'offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.—

Enter Rosencrantz.

How now? what hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

[5] Hamlet affects obscurity. His meaning may be, "The king is a *body* without a *kingly soul*, a thing—of nothing."

[6] *Hide fox, and all after.* This was a juvenile sport, most probably what is now called *hoop*, or *hide and seek*; in which one child hides himself, and the rest run *all after*, seeking him. The words are not in the quarto.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet[a]: we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots; Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

[*King.* Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm[1].]

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there. [*To some* Attendants.

Ham. He will stay till ye come.

[*Exeunt* Attendants.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: Therefore prepare thyself;

[a] The reader will not fail to see the allusion here to the *Diets* of the Empire convoked at *Worms;* an event so notorious from its connection with the progress of the Reformation. The word *politick* is not in the folio.

[1] *Alas, Alas!* This speech, and the following one of Hamlet, are omitted in the folio.

The bark is ready, and the wind at help[2],
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them.—But, come; for England!—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: Father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night;
Away; for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: 'Pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set[3]
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters cónjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectick in my blood he rages[4],
And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*

[2] i. e. in modern phrase, "the wind *serves*," or is right to *aid* or *help* you on your way.

[3] To *set* formerly meant to *estimate*. There is no ellipsis, as Malone supposed. "To *sette*, or tell the pryce; *æstimare*." To *set* much or little by a thing, is to *estimate* it much or little.

[4] "I would forget her, but a *fever* she
Reigns in my blood." *Love's Labour's Lost.*

SCENE IV. *A Plain in* Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, *and Forces, marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Claims[1] the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye[2],
And let him know so.
Cap. I will do't, my lord.
For. Go softly on[a].
[*Exeunt* FORTINBRAS *and Forces.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *&c.*

[[3] *Ham.* Good sir, whose powers are these?
Cap. They are of Norway, sir.
Ham. How purpos'd, sir
I pray you?
Cap. Against some part of Poland.
Ham. Who
Commands them, sir?
Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.
Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?
Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.

[1] The quarto reads, *craves.*

[2] *Eye* for *presence.* In the Regulations for the establishment of the Queen's Household, 1627:—"All such as doe service *in the queen's eye.*" And in The Establishment of Prince Henry's Household, 1610:—"All such as doe service *in the prince's eye.*" It was the formulary for the royal *presence.*

[a] The folio misprints *safely* for *softly.*

[3] The remainder of this scene is omitted in the folio.

To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace;
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Cap. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit* Captain.

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before. [*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse[4],
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven[5] scruple

[4] See note 23 on Act i. Sc. 2, p. 143. It is evident that discursive powers of mind are meant; or, as Johnson explains it, "such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future." Since I wrote the former note, I find that Bishop Wilkins makes *ratiocination* and *discourse* convertible terms.

[5] *Craven* is *recreant, cowardly.* It may be satisfactorily traced from *crant, creant,* the old French word for an act of submission. It is so written in the old metrical romance of Ywaine and Gawaine (Ritson, vol. i. p. 133):—

"Or yelde the til us als *creant.*"

And in Richard Cœur de Lion (Weber, vol. ii. p. 208):—

"On knees he fel down, and cryde, '*Créaunt.*'"

It then became *cravant, cravent,* and at length *craven.* It is superfluous to add that *recreant* is from the same source.

Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do:*
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:
Witness, this army of such mass, and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
Is, not to stir without great argument;
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason, and my blood[6],
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds: fight for a plot[7]
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough, and continent[8],
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*

[6] *Excitements of my reason and my blood.* i. e. "Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance."

[7] A *plot* of ground. Thus in The Mirror for Magistrates:—

"Of ground to win a *plot*, a while to dwell,
We venture lives, and send our souls to hell."

[8] *Continent* means *that which comprehends or encloses.* Thus in Lear:— "Rive your concealing *continents.*"
And in Chapman's version of the third Iliad:—

"Did take
Thy fair form for a *continent* of parts as fair."

"If there be no fulnesse, then is the *continent* greater than the content."—*Bacon's Advancement of Learning*, 1633, p. 7.

Scene V. Elsinore. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter Queen *and* Horatio.

Queen. ——I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract;
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she hears,
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously[1] at straws; speaks things in doubt
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection[2]; they aim[3] at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might[4] be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily[5].

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds:

[1] *Envy* is often used by Shakespeare and his cotemporaries for *malice, spite,* or *hatred*:—

"You turn the good we offer into *envy*."

King Henry VIII.

See Merchant of Venice, Act iv. Sc. 1. Indeed "*enviously*, and spitefully," are treated as synonymous by our old writers.

[2] *To collection*, i. e. *to gather or deduce consequences from such premises.* Thus in Cymbeline, Act v. Sc. 5:—

"Whose containing
Is so from sense to hardness, that I can
Make no *collection* of it."

See note on that passage.

[3] The quartos read, *yawn.* To *aim* is to *guess.*

[4] The folio reads, *would.*

[5] *Unhappily*, that is, *mischievously.*

Let her come in[6]. [*Exit* HORATIO.
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss[7]:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA[8].

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?
Queen. How now, Ophelia?
Oph. *How should I your true love know,*
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon[9]. [*Singing.*
Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?
Oph. Say you? nay; 'pray you, mark.
He is dead and gone, lady, [*Sings.*
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.
O, ho!
Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,——
Oph. 'Pray you, mark.
White his shroud as the mountain snow. [*Sings.*

[6] The three first lines of this speech are given to Horatio in the quarto.

[7] Shakespeare is not singular in his use of *amiss* as a substantive. Several instances are adduced by Steevens, and more by Mr. Nares in his Glossary. *Each toy* is, *each trifle.*

[8] The quarto, 1603, gives the stage direction, "Enter Ophelia, playing on a lute, with her hair down, singing." "There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage more pathetic than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes. A great sensibility, or none at all, seem to produce the same effects. In the latter [case] the audience supply what is wanting, and with the former they sympathize."—*Sir J. Reynolds.*

[9] These were the badges of pilgrims. The *cockle shell* was an emblem of their intention to go beyond sea. The habit being held sacred, was often assumed as a disguise in love adventures. In The Old Wive's Tale, by Peele, 1595:—"I will give thee a palmer's *staff* of ivory, and a *scallop shell* of beaten gold."

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. *Larded all with sweet flowers;*
Which bewept to the grave[10] *did go,*
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God'ield[11] you! They say, the owl was a baker's daughter[12]. Lord! we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. 'Pray, let us have no words of this; but when they ask you what it means, say you this:

Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day[13],

[10] The quarto reads *ground.* All the copies have, "did *not* go."

[11] See Macbeth, Act i. Sc. vi.

[12] "This," says Mr. Douce, "is a common tradition in Gloucestershire, and is thus related:—'Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough in the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter, who insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon the baker's daughter cried out Heugh, heugh, heugh, which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour to transform her into that bird for her wickedness.' The story is related to deter children from illiberal behaviour to the poor."

[13] The old copies read:—

"*To*-morrow 'tis Saint Valentine's day."

The emendation was made by Dr. Farmer. The origin of the choosing of Valentines has not been clearly developed. Mr. Douce traces it to a Pagan custom of the same kind during the Lupercalia feasts in honour of Pan and Juno, celebrated in the month of February by the Romans. The anniversary of the good bishop, or Saint Valentine, happening in this month, the pious early promoters of Christianity placed this popular custom under the patronage of the saint, in order to eradicate the notion of its pagan origin. In France the *Valantin* was a moveable feast, celebrated on the first Sunday in Lent, which was called the *jour des brandons*, because the boys carried about lighted torches on

All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:

Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes,
And dupp'd[14] *the chamber door;*
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

By Gis, and by Saint Charity[15],
Alack, and fye for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed:
[He answers.]
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i' the cold ground: My brother shall know of

that day. It is very probable that the saint has nothing to do with the custom, his legend gives no clue to any such supposition. The popular notion that the birds choose their mates about this period has its rise in the poetical world of fiction.

[14] To *dup* is to *do up*, as to *don* is to *do on*, to *doff* to *do off*, &c. Thus in Damon and Pythias, 1582:—"The porters are drunk, will they not *dup* the gate to-day?" The phrase probably had its origin from *doing up* or lifting the latch. In the old cant language to *dup* the *gyger* was to open the door. See Harman's Caveat for Cursetors, 1575.

[15] *Saint Charity* is found in the Martyrology on the first of August. "Romæ passio sanctarum virginum Fidei, Spei, et *Charitas*, quæ sub Hadriano principe martyriæ coronam adeptæ sunt." Spenser mentions her in Eclog. v. 225. *By gis* and *by cock* are only corruptions, or rather substitutions, for different forms of imprecation by the sacred name.

it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night. [*Exit.*

King. Follow her close! give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit* HORATIO.

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude[16],
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: The people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly[17],
In hugger-mugger[18] t'inter him: Poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgement;
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:
Feeds on his wonder[19], keeps himself in clouds,

[16] In the quarto 1603 the King says:—

"Ah pretty wretch! this is a change indeed:
O time, how swiftly runs our joys away?
Content on earth was never certain bred,
To-day we laugh and live, to-morrow dead."

[17] *Greenly* is *unskilfully*, with *inexperience*.

[18] i. e. *secretly*. "Clandestinare, *to hide or conceal by stealth*, or in *hugger mugger*."—*Florio*. Thus in North's translation of Plutarch:—"Antonius, thinking that his body should be honourably buried, and not in *hugger mugger*." Pope, offended at this strange phrase, changed it to *private*, and was followed by others. Upon which Johnson remarks:—"If phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost: we shall no longer have the words of any author: and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning."

[19] So the quartos. The folio reads, "*Keeps* on his wonder."

And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude! this,
Like to a murdering piece[20], in many places
Gives me superfluous death! [*A noise within.*

Queen. Alack! what noise is this[21]?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend!
Where are my Switzers[22]? Let them guard the door:
What is the matter?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord;
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers! The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be king*[23]!

[20] A *murdering-piece*, or *murderer*, was a small piece of artillery; in French *meurtrière*. It took its name from the loop-holes and embrasures in towers and fortifications, which were so called. The portholes in the forecastle of a ship were also thus denominated. "*Meurtriere*, c'est un petit canonniere, comme celles des tours et murailles, ainsi appellé, parceque tirant par icelle a desceu, ceux ausquels on tire sont facilement meurtri."—*Nicot.* "*Visiere meurtriere*, a port-hole for a *murthering-piece* in the forecastle of a ship."—*Cotgrave.* Case shot, filled with small bullets, nails, old iron, &c. was often used in these *murderers*. This accounts for the raking fire attributed to them in the text, and in Beaumont and Fletcher's Double Marriage:—

"Like a *murdering-piece*, aims not at me,
But all that stand within the dangerous level."

[21] The speech of the queen is omitted in the quartos.

[22] *Switzers*, for *royal guards*. The Swiss were then, as since, mercenary soldiers of any nation that could afford to pay them.

[23] The meaning of this contested passage appears to me this:

Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter[24], you false Danish dogs.

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed;* Danes *following.*

Laer. Where is this king? — Sirs, stand you all without.

Dan. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Dan. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*

Laer. I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,
Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm[a], proclaims me bastard;
Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched[25] brow
Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;

The rabble call him lord; and (*as if* the world were now but to begin, *as if* antiquity *were* forgot, and custom unknown, which are the ratifiers and props of every word,) cry, *Choose we*, &c. Mr. Tyrwhitt would read *work* instead of *word*. The reader may compare the speech of Ulysses on tradition in Troilus and Cressida.

[24] Hounds are said to run *counter* when they are upon a false scent, or hunt it by the heel, running backward and mistaking the course of the game. See Comedy of Errors, Act iv. Sc. 2.

[a] Thus the quartos, 1604, &c. The folio has—
"That drop of blood, *that calmes.*"

[25] *Unsmirched* is *unsullied, spotless.* See Act i. Sc. 3, p. 150, note 4.

There's such divinity doth hedge[26] a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd;—Let him go, Gertrude;—
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,—
That both the worlds I give to negligence[27],
Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world's:
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,

[26] The quarto, 1603, reads *wall.* Mr. Boswell has adduced the following anecdote of Queen Elizabeth as an apposite illustration of this passage:—"While her Majesty was on the Thames, near Greenwich, a shot was fired by accident, which struck the royal barge, and hurt a waterman near her. The French ambassador being amazed, and all crying Treason, Treason! yet she, with an undaunted spirit, came to the open place of the barge, and bade them never fear, for if the shot were made at her, they durst not shoot again: such majesty had her presence, and such boldness her heart, that she despised fear, and was, as all princes are, or should be, so full of *divine fullness*, that guiltie mortality durst not behold her but with dazzled eyes."—*Henry Chettle's England's Mourning Garment.*

[27] "But let the frame of things disjoint, *both the worlds* suffer."
Macbeth.

That, sweep-stake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood[28].

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly[29] in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgement pierce[30]
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA, *fantastically dressed with Straws and Flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!

[28] The folio reads *politician* instead of *pelican*, and has other misprints in this scene. This fabulous bird is not unfrequently made use of for purposes of poetical illustration by our elder poets: Shakespeare has again referred to it in King Richard II. and in King Lear:—

"'Twas this flesh begot these *pelican* daughters."

In the old play of King Leir, 1605, it is also used, but in a different sense:—

"I am as kind as is the *pelican*,
That kills itself to save her young ones' lives."

[29] The folio reads, *sensible.*

[30] *Peirce* is the reading of the folio. The quarto has *'pear*, an awkward contraction of *appear*. I do not see why *appear* is more intelligible. Indeed as *level* is here used for *direct*, Shakespeare's usual meaning of the word, the reading of the quarto, preferred by Johnson, Steevens, and Mr. Collier, is less proper.

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine[31] in love; and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier;*
Hey non nonny, nonny hey nonny:
And on his grave rains[a] *many a tear;*—
Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down-a-down, an you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel[32] becomes it! it is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

[31] *Nature is fine in love.* The three concluding lines of this speech are not in the quarto. The meaning appears to be, Nature is refined or subtilised by love, the senses are rendered more ethereal, and being thus refined, some precious portions of the mental energies fly off, or are sent after the beloved object; when bereft of that object they are lost to us, and we are left in a state of mental privation:—

" Even so by love the young and tender wit
Is turned to folly."
" Love is a smoke, rais'd with the fume of sighs;
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
What is it else?—a madness," &c.

[a] The quarto has " *in* his grave *rains.* The folio prints the next line in italics as part of the song.

[32] The *wheel* is the *burthen* of a ballad, from the Latin *rota*, a *round*, which is usually accompanied with a burthen frequently repeated. Thus also in old French, *roterie* signified such a *round* or *catch*, and *rotuenge*, or *rotruhenge*, the *burthen* or *refrain* as it is now called. Our old English term *refrette*, " the foote of the dittie, a verse often interlaced, or the burden of a song," was probably from *refrain*; or from *refresteler*, to pipe over again. It is used by Chaucer in The Testament of Love. This term was not obsolete in Cotgrave's time, though it would now be as difficult to adduce an instance of its use as of the *wheel*, at the same time the quotation will show that the *down* of a ballad was another

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; 'pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts[33].

term for the *burthen*. "Refrain, the *refret*, burthen, or *downe* of a ballad." Steevens unfortunately forgot to note from whence he made the following extract, though he knew it was from the preface to some black letter collection of songs or sonnets:—"The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche graced with the *wheele*, which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof." Thus also Nicholas Breton, in his Toyes for Idle Head, 1577:—

"That I may sing full merrily
Not heigh ho *wele*, but care away."

It should be remembered that the old musical instrument called a *rote*, from its *wheel*, was also termed *vielle*, quasi *wheel*.

[33] Our ancestors gave to almost every flower and plant its emblematic meaning, and like the ladies of the east, made them almost as expressive as written language, in their hieroglyphical sense. Perdita, in The Winter's Tale, distributes her flowers in the same manner as Ophelia, and some of them with the same meaning. In The Handfull of Pleasant Delites, 1584, we have a ballad called "A Nosegaie alwaies sweet for Lovers to send for Tokens," where we find:—

"*Rosemarie* is for *remembrance*
Betweene us day and night;
Wishing that I might alwaies have
You present in my sight."

Rosemary had this attribute because it was said to strengthen the memory, and was therefore used as a token of remembrance and affection between lovers, and was distributed as an emblem both at weddings and funerals. Why *pansies*, which the folio misprints *paconcies*, (pensées,) are emblems of thoughts is obvious. *Fennel* was emblematic of *flattery*, and "Dare finocchio, to give fennel," was in other words "to flatter, to dissemble," according to Florio. Thus in the ballad above cited:—

"*Fennel* is for *flatterers*,
An evil thing 'tis sure."

Browne, in his Britannia's Pastorals, says:—

"The *columbine*, in tawny often taken,
Is then ascribed to such as are *forsaken*."

Rue was for *ruth* or *repentance*. It was also commonly called *herbgrace*, probably from being accounted "a present remedy against all poison, and a potent auxiliary in exorcisms, all evil things fleeing from it." By wearing it with a difference (an heraldic term for a mark of distinction) may be meant that the

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines:—there's rue for you; and here's some for me:—we may call it, herb of grace o'Sundays:—O! you must wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy:—I would give you some violets; but they wither'd all, when my father died:—They say, he made a good end,——

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,— [*Sings.*

Laer. Thought[34] and affliction, passion, hell itself, She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again?* [*Sings.*
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.
His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
God ha'mercy on his soul[35]*!*

queen should wear it as a *mark of repentance;* Ophelia as a *token of grief.* The *daisy* was emblematic of a *dissembler*:—"Next them grew the *dissembling daisy,* to warne such light of love wenches not to trust every fair promise that such amorous batchelors make."—*Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier.* The *violet* is for *faithfulness,* and is thus characterised in The Lover's Nosegaie. In Bion's beautiful elegy on the death of Adonis, Mr. Todd has pointed out:—

"πάντα σὺν αὐτῳ
Ὡς τῆνος τέθνακε, καὶ ἄνθεα πάντ' ἐμαράνθη."

[34] *Thought,* among our ancestors, was used for *grief, care, pensiveness.* "Curarum volvere in pectore. He will die for sorrow and *thought.*"—*Baret.* Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—Act iii. Sc. 2:—

"*Cleo.* What shall we do, Enobarbus?
"*Eno.* *Think* and *die.*"

See note on that passage.

[35] Poor Ophelia in her madness remembers the ends of many

And of all christian souls! I pray God. God be wi' you! [*Exit* OPHELIA.

Laer. Do you see this, O God[a]?

King. Laertes, I must commune[36] with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content[37].

Laer. Let this be so;

old popular ballads. "Bonny Robin" appears to have been a favourite, for there were many others written to that tune. The editors have not traced the present one. It is introduced in Eastward Hoe, written by Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, where some parts of this play are apparently burlesqued. Hamlet is the name given to a foolish footman in the same scene. I know not why it should be considered an attack on Shakespeare; it was the usual license of comedy to sport with every thing serious and even sacred. Hamlet Travestie may as well be called an invidious attack on Shakespeare.

[a] The folio has—

"Do you see this, *you gods*?"

The quarto omits *see*, and *I pray God* in Ophelia's speech.

[36] The folio reads *common*, which is only a varied orthography of the same word. "We will devise and *common* of these matters."—*Baret.*

[37] Thus in the quarto 1603:—

"*King.* Content you, good Laertes, for a time,
Although I know your grief is as a flood,
Brim full of sorrow, but forbear a while,
And think already the revenge is done
On him that makes you such a hapless son.

"*Laer.* You have prevail'd, my lord, a while I'll strive,
To bury grief within a tomb of wrath,
Which once unhearsed, then the world shall hear
Laertes had a father he held dear.

"*King.* No more of that, ere many days be done
You shall hear that you do not dream upon."

His means of death, his obscure burial[38],
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation[39],—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;
And where th' offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter HORATIO *and a* Servant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors[1], sir; they say, they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.— [*Exit* Servant.
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir: it comes[2] from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment

[38] The quarto, 1604, has *funeral.*

[39] The funerals of knights and persons of rank were made with great ceremony and ostentation formerly. Sir John Hawkins (himself of the order) observes that "the sword, the helmet, the gauntlet, spurs, and tabard are still hung over the grave of every knight."

[1] The quarto reads, *sea-faring men.*

[2] The folio reads, *it came.*

gave us chase: Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine[3] ear, will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore[4] of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET."

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *Another Room in the same.*

Enter KING *and* LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears:—But tell me,
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful[1] and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

[3] The folio reads, *your.*

[4] The *bore* is the *caliber* of a gun. The matter (says Hamlet) would carry heavier words.

[1] The quarto reads, *criminal.* *Greatness* is omitted in the folio.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either-which),
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a publick count I might not go,
Is, the great love the general gender[2] bear him:
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces[3]; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind[4],
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again[5],
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:—But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger[6],
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:

[2] i. e. *the common race of the people.* We have the *general* and the *million* in other places in the same sense.

[3] "*Would*, like the spring which turneth wood to stone, convert his *fetters* into graces:" punishment would only give him more grace in their opinion. The quarto reads *work* for *would.*

[4] *My arrows*
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind.
"*Lighte shaftes* cannot stand in a *rough wind.*"—*Ascham's Toxophilus*, 1589, p. 57.

[5] *If praises may go back again*, i. e. *if I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more.*

[6] "Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam
Jupiter?" *Persius*, Sat. ii.

I lov'd your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—

Enter a Messenger.

How now[7]? what news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say: I saw them not;
They were given me by Claudio, he received them
Of him that brought them[8].

King. Laertes, you shall hear them:—
Leave us. [*Exit* Messenger.

[*Reads.*] "High and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return. HAMLET."

What should this mean! Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked*,—
And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone:*
Can you advise me?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,
As how should it be so? how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?

[7] *How now* is omitted in the quarto: as is *letters* in the next speech.

[8] This hemistich is not in the folio, in which also the words "and more strange" in the letter are omitted.

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace[9].

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,—
As checking[10] at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it, accident.

Laer. [My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege[11].

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness[12].] Two months since,

[9] First folio, omitting *Ay, my lord,* reads, *If so, you'll not o'errule me to a peace.*

[10] Thus the folio. Two of the quartos read, "As liking not his voyage." To *check,* to *hold off,* or *fly from, as in fear.* It is a phrase taken from falconry:—"For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may tomorrow *check* at the lure."—*Hinde's Eliosto Libidinoso,* 1606.

[11] *Of the unworthiest siege,* i. e. *of the lowest rank: siege* for *seat* or *place:*—

"I fetch my birth
From men of royal *siege.*" *Othello.*

[12] i. e. *implying* or *denoting gravity and attention to health.* If we

Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and serv'd against the French,
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks[13],
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence[14],
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: [the scrimers[15] of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them:] Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this,——

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?

should not rather read *wealth* for *health*. The passages in brackets are not in the folio.

[13] *That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks*, i. e. *that I, in imagining and describing his feats*, &c. The folio has *pass'd* instead of *topp'd* in the preceding line.

[14] *Science of defence*, i. e. *fencing*.

[15] *Scrimers*, i. e. *fencers*, from escrimeur, Fr. This unfavourable description of French swordsmen is not in the folio.

Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think, you did not love your father;
But that I know, love is begun by time[16];
And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
[There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it:
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy[17],
Dies in his own too-much: That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this *would* changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this *should* is like a spendthrift's sigh[18],
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer:]
Hamlet comes back; What would you undertake,

[16] *But that I know love is begun by time*, &c. "As love is begun by *time*, and has its gradual increase, so *time* qualifies and abates it." *Passages of proof* are *transactions of daily experience.* The next ten lines are not in the folio.

[17] *Plurisy* is *superabundance*; our ancestors used the word in this sense, as if it came from *plus, pluris*, and not from πλευρὰ. The disease was formerly thought to proceed from too much blood flowing to the part affected:—

"In a word,
Thy *plurisy* of goodness is thy ill."
Massinger's Unnatural Combat.

[18] Johnson says it is a prevalent notion "that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers." Shakespeare in King Henry VI. has "*blood-consuming sighs.*" And in Fenton's Tragical Discourses:—"Your scorching *sighes* that have already drained your body of his wholesome humoures." Mr. Blakeway justly observes, that "Sorrow for neglected opportunities and time abused seems most aptly compared to *the sigh of a spendthrift*—good resolutions not carried into effect are deeply injurious to the moral character. Like sighs, *they hurt by easing*, they unburden the mind and satisfy the conscience, without producing any effect upon the conduct."

To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber:
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,
And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated[19], and, in a pass of practice[20],
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't:
And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip[a] a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion; that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death[21].

[19] i. e. *unblunted*, to *bate*, or rather "*to rebate*, was to *make dull*. Aciem ferre hebetare." Thus in Love's Labour's Lost, we have:—

"That honour which shall *bate* his scythe's keen edge."

And in Measure for Measure:—

"*Rebate* and blunt his natural edge."

[20] *Pass of practice* is a *pass of skill*, one in which the fencer was well *practised*.

[a] The folio misprints "*I but dipt* a knife in it."

[21] Ritson has exclaimed with just indignation and abhorrence against the villainous assassinlike treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot: he observes, "There is more occasion that he should be pointed out for an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we

King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
May fit us to our shape: If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd: therefore this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof[22]. Soft;—let me see:—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings[23],
I hav't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end,)
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd[24] him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck[25],
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise[26]?

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow:—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant[27] the brook,

are led to respect and admire in some preceding scenes." In the old quarto of 1603 this contrivance originates with the king:—

"When you are hot, in midst of all your play,
Among the foils shall a keen rapier lie,
Steeped in a mixture of deadly poison,
That if it draws but the least dram of blood
In any part of him he cannot live."

[22] *If this should blast in proof*, as fire-arms sometimes burst in proving their strength.

[23] *Cunning* is *skill.* The folio has *commings.*

[24] The quartos read *prefer'd;* the folio *prepar'd.* The modern editors read *preferr'd,* but I think without good reason.

[25] A *stuck* is a *thrust.* Stoccata, Ital. Sometimes called a *stoccado* in English.

[26] *But stay, what noise?* These words are not in the folio, which substitutes "How, sweet queen."

[27] The quartos have *ascaunt;* and two lines lower,

"*Therewith* fantastick garlands did she *make.*"

That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream:
There with fantastick garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples[28],
That liberal[29] shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes[30];
As one incapable[31] of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indu'd[32]
Unto that element: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas! then, is she drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: But yet[33]

[28] The ancient botanical name of the *long purples* was *testiculis morionis*, or *orchis priapiscus*. The *grosser name* to which the queen alludes is sufficiently known in many parts of England. It had kindred appellations in other languages. In Sussex it is said to be called *dead men's hands*. Its various names may be seen in Lyte's Herbal, 1578, or in Cotgrave's Dictionary.

[29] i. e. *licentious*. See Much Ado about Nothing, Act iv. Sc. 1, and Othello, Act ii. Sc. 1.

[30] The quarto reads "snatches of old *lauds*," i. e. *hymns*. Hymns of praise were so called from the psalm *Laudate Dominum*.

[31] i. e. *unsusceptible* of it. See note 22, p. 244.

[32] *Indu'd* was anciently used in the sense of *endowed* with qualities of any kind, as in the phrase "a child *indued* with the grace and dexteritie that his father had." Shakespeare may, however, have used it for *habited, accustomed*.

[33] Thus the quarto 1603:—

"Therefore I will not drown thee in my tears,
Revenge it is must yield this heart relief,
For woe begets woe, and grief hangs on grief."

It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out[34].—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns[35] it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *A Church Yard.*

Enter Two Clowns, *with Spades, &c.*

1 *Clown.*

IS she to be buried in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; and therefore make her grave straight[1]: the crowner hath sate on her, and finds it christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

[34] Thus in King Henry V. Act iv. Sc. 6:—
"But all my mother came into my eyes,
And gave me up to tears."

[35] The folio reads, *doubts* it, i. e. *does it out.*

[1] How Johnson could think that any particular mode of making Ophelia's grave was meant I cannot imagine. Nothing is so common as this mode of expression: *straight* is merely a contraction of *straightway*, immediately. Numerous examples are to be found in Shakespeare, one may suffice from this very play; in Act iii. Sc. 4, Polonius says:—
"He will come *straight.*"
And Malone cites from G. Herbert's Jacula Prudentum, 1651:—"There is no churchyard so handsome that a man would desire *straight* to be buried there."

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo ;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform[2]; Argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good; here stands the man; good: If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry is't; crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: And the more pity; that great folks should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even-christian[3]. Come, my spade. There is no ancient

[2] Warburton says that this is a ridicule on scholastic divisions without distinction; and of distinctions without difference. Shakespeare certainly aims at the legal subtleties used upon occasion of inquests. Sir John Hawkins points out the case of Dame Hales, in Plowden's Commentaries. Her husband Sir James drowned himself in a fit of insanity (produced, it was supposed, by his having been one of the judges who condemned Lady Jane Grey), and the question was about the forfeiture of a lease. There was a great deal of this law logic used on the occasion, as whether he was the *agent* or *patient;* or in other words (as the clown says), whether *he went to the water, or the water came to him.*

[3] *Even-christian,* for *fellow-christian,* was the old mode of expression; and is to be found in Chaucer and the Chroniclers. Wicliffe has *even-servant* for *fellow-servant.* The fact is, that *even, like,* and *equal* were synonymous. I will add one more ancient example of the phrase to those cited by Malone:—

gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers: they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* Why, he had none[4].

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digged: Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church: argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again: come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke[5].

> "For when a man wol rigt knowe,
> Al maner of dette that he owe,
> Bothe to God that is ful of migt
> And to his *even cristen* rigt."
>
> *Hampole's Speculum Vitæ.*

In Alfred's Saxon version of S. Gregory's Pastoralis Cura, we have ęþon-ðeow, consocius.

[4] This speech and the next, as far as *arms*, are not in the quarto.

[5] *Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.* This was a common phrase for giving over or ceasing to do a thing; a metaphor derived from the *unyoking* of oxen at the end of their labour. Thus in a dittie of the Workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to Holinshed:—

> "My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,
> My foot is sore, I can worke no more."

These pithy questions were doubtless the fireside amusement of

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance.*

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are ask'd this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan and fetch me a stoup of liquor. [*Exit* 2 Clown.

1 Clown *digs, and sings.*

In youth, when I did love, did love[6],
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove
O, methought, there was nothing meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? a' sings in grave-making[a].

our rustic ancestors. Steevens mentions a collection of them in print, preserved in a volume of scarce tracts in the university library at Cambridge, D. 5. 2. "The innocence of these *demaundes joyous*," he says, "may deserve a praise not always due to their delicacy."

[6] The original ballad from whence these stanzas are taken is printed in Tottel's Miscellany, or "Songes and Sonnettes" by Lord Surrey and others, 1575. The ballad is attributed to Lord Vaux, and is printed by Dr. Percy in the first volume of his Reliques of Antient Poetry. The ohs and the ahs were most probably meant to express the interruption of the song by the forcible emission of the grave-digger's breath at each stroke of the mattock. The original runs thus:—

"I lothe that I did love;
In youth that I thought swete:
As time requires for my behove,
Methinks they are not mete.

"For age with stealing steps
Hath claude me with his crowch;
And lusty youthe away he leaps,
As there had bene none such."

[a] The folio has "that *he* sings *at* grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 *Clo.* *But age, with his stealing steps,*
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.
[*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches[7]; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?* This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not[8]?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so, and now my lady Worm's; chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats[9] with them? mine ache to think on't.

1 *Clo.* *A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,* [*Sings.*

[7] The folio reads, *ore-offices.*

[8] "My lord, you gave
Good words the other day of a bay courser
I rode on; it is yours, because you liked it."
Timon of Athens, Act i.

[9] *Loggats* are *small logs* or *pieces of wood.* Hence *loggats* was the name of an ancient rustic game, in which a stake was fixed in the ground at which *loggats* were thrown; in short, a ruder kind of quoit play.

For and[10] *a shrouding sheet:*
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. There's another: Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits[11] now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce[12] with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers[13], his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries[14], to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances

[10] *For and*, as Mr. Dyce has shown, is equivalent to, "And eke," as it stands in Percy's Reliques.

[11] *Quiddits* are *quirks*, or *subtle questions*; and *quillets* are *nice and frivolous distinctions*. The etymology of this last foolish word has plagued many learned heads. I think that Blount, in his Glossography, clearly points out *quodlibet* as the origin of it. It became *quidlibet*, *quiblet*, and then *quillet*, which Bishop Wilkins calls "a frivolousness;" and Coles in his Latin Dict. *res frivola*. I find the quarto of 1603 has *quirks* instead of *quiddits*.

[12] *Sconce*, i. e. *head*. See Comedy of Errors, Act i. Sc. 2, note 6.

[13] Shakespeare here is profuse of his legal learning. Ritson, a lawyer, shall interpret for him:—"A recovery with *double voucher*, is the one usually suffered, and is so called from *two* persons (the latter of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person) being successively *voucher*, or called upon to warrant the tenant's title. Both *fines* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into a fee simple. Statutes are (not acts of parliament) but statutes *merchant*, and staple, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgment for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed."

[14] "Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries:" omitted in the quarto.

of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance[15] in that. I will speak to this fellow:— Whose grave's this, sirrah?

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir.

O, a pit of clay for to be made [*Sings.*
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed, for thou liest in't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then?

1 *Clo.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1 *Clo.* One, that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card[16], or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three[17] years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked[18], that the toe of

[15] A quibble is intended. *Deeds* (of parchment) are called the common *assurances* of the realm.

[16] To *speak by the card* is to *speak precisely, by rule*, or *according to a prescribed course.* It is a metaphor from the seaman's *card* or *chart* by which he guides his course.

[17] *Seven*, quarto 1603.

[18] *Picked* is *curious, over nice.* Thus in the Cambridge Dict

the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras[19].

Ham. How long is that since?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born[20]: he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he[21].

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

1594:—"Conquisitus, exquisite, and *picked*, perfite, fine, dainty, *curious*." See King John, Act i. Sc. 1, p. 259.

[19] "Look you, here's a skull hath been here this *dozen year*, let me see, ay, ever since our last King Hamlet slew Fortenbrasse in combat: young Hamlet's father, he that's mad."—Quarto of 1603. It will be seen that the poet places this event *thirty years* ago in the present copy. See the next note by Sir William Blackstone.

[20] "By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-three years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young* man, one that designed to go back to school, *i. e.* to the university of Wittenburgh. The poet in the fifth act had forgot what he wrote in the first."—*Blackstone.*

[21] "Nimirum insanus paucis videatur; eo quod
Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem."
Horat. Sat. 3, Lib. ii.

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die (as we have many pocky corses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in), he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now hath lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue, a' pour'd a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, this same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Let me see [*Takes the scull*]. Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning[22]? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber[23], and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour[24] she must come; make her laugh at that.—'Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

[22] The folio has *jeering.*

[23] The quartos, except that of 1603, have *table.*

[24] *Favour* is *countenance, appearance.*

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! [*Throws down the Scull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bunghole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, 'faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer barrel?

Imperious[25] Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall t'expel the winter's flaw[26]!

Enter Priests, *&c. in Procession; the Corpse of* OPHELIA, LAERTES *and Mourners following;* King, Queen, *their Trains, &c.*

But soft! but soft! aside:—Here comes the king,
The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites! This doth betoken,
The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo[27] its own life. 'Twas of some estate[28].

[25] *Imperial* is substituted in the folio. Vide Troilus and Cressida, Act iv. Sc. 5, p. 257, note 24.

[26] A *flaw* is a *violent gust of wind.* See Coriolanus, Act v. Sc. 3, p. 434, note 9.

[27] To *fordo* is to *undo*, to *destroy.* Thus in Othello:—

"This is the night
That either makes me or *fordoes* me quite."

"Would to God it might be leful for me to *fordoo* myself, or to

Couch we awhile, and mark.

[*Retiring with* HORATIO.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

1 *Priest*[29]. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty: Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards[30], flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her,
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants[31],
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1 *Priest.* No more be done!

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*[32], and such rest to her

make an end of me."—*Acolastus*, 1529. The old copies have here, as elsewhere, *it* for *its*.

[28] *Estate* for *rank*. *Estates* was a common term for *persons of rank*.

[29] The quarto has, *Doctor*.

[30] "*Shards*, quasi *shreds*," as Tooke says, "the past participle of the verb ꝛcyꝛnan, to sheer, cut off, or divide. It does not only mean fragments of pots and tiles, but rubbish of any kind." Baret has "*shardes of stones*, fragmentum lapidis;" and "*shardes*, or pieces of stones broken and shattred, rubbel or rubbish of old houses." Our version of the Bible has preserved to us *pot-sherds*; and I have heard bricklayers, in Surrey and Sussex, use the compounds *tile-sherds*, *slate-sherds*, &c.

[31] i. e. *garlands*. Still used in most northern languages, but no other example of its use among us has yet offered itself. It is thought that Shakespeare may have met with the word in some old history of Hamlet, which furnished him with his fable. In the first folio it is changed for *rites*, a less appropriate word. Warburton boldly substituted *chants*, and Mr. Alexander Chalmers affirms that this is the true word, notwithstanding what follows!

[32] The folio has "*sage* requiem." A *requiem* is a *mass sung*

As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring[33]!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What! the fair Ophelia?

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: Farewell!
[*Scattering Flowers.*
I hop'd, thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not t'have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of!—Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[*Leaps into the Grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead;
Till of this flat a mountain you have made
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the Grave.*

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetive and rash,

for the rest of the soul of the dead. So called from the words—"Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine," &c. part of the service.

[33] "E tumulo fortunataque favilla
Nascentur violæ?" *Persius*, Sat. i.

Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: Hold off thy hand[34].

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet! Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,——

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the Grave.*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up Esile[35], eat a crocodile?

[34] The folio:—

"Which let thy wisenes fear: Away thy hand."

[35] The quarto of 1603 reads:—"*Wilt* drink up *vessels;*" and instead of Ossa, *Oosell*. *Woo't* or *woot'o*, in the northern counties, is the common contraction of *wouldst thou*, and this is the reading of the old copies. It was a fashion with the gallants of Shakespeare's time to do some extravagant feat *as a proof of their love* in honour of their mistresses, and among others the swallowing of some nauseous potion was one of the most frequent. Some of the commentators have supposed that by *eisell* Hamlet meant *vinegar*, and others that some northern *river* is meant. But though *eisell* certainly signified vinegar, it appears that it also signified *wormwood*, which is what is here meant, as well as in the poet's 111th Sonnet:—

"Whilst like a willing patient I will drink
Potions of *Eysell* 'gainst my strong infection;
No *bitterness*, that I will bitter think,
Nor *double penance* to correct correction."

Here we see it was a *bitter potion* which it was a penance to drink. In Thomas's Italian Dictionary, 1562, we have "Assentio

I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart!—Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness.
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed[36],
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.—
[*Exit* HORATIO.
Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
[*To* LAERTES.
We'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
This grave shall have a living monument:

Eysell, and Florio renders the same word by *Wormwood.* It is probable that the propoma called Absinthites, a nauseously bitter medicament then much in use, may have been in the poet's mind. To *drink up* a quantity of which would be an extreme pass of amorous demonstration. I must refer to a more extended note on the subject in Notes and Queries, vol. ii. p. 241, and to Mr. Hickson's able defence of it in vol. iii. p. 119, of the same periodical.

[36] See note 32 on Act iii. Sc. 1, p. 212. The *golden couplets* allude to the dove only laying two eggs. The young nestlings when first disclosed are only covered with a yellow down, and the mother rarely leaves the nest, in consequence of the tenderness of her young. This speech in the folio is given to the king.

An hour of quiet thereby[37] shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;—
You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought, I lay
Worse than the mutines[1] in the bilboes[2]. Rashly,—
(And prais'd be rashness for it;—let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall[3]; and that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

[37] So all the quartos after that of 1604. The folio has *shortly*. The quarto, 1603, has no corresponding line.

[1] i. e. *mutineers*. See King John, Act ii. Sc. 2.

[2] The *bilboes* were *bars of iron with fetters annexed to them*, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, in Spain, where implements of iron and steel were fabricated. To understand Shakespeare's allusion, it should be known that as these fetters connected the legs of the offenders very closely together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confinement. The *bilboes* are still shown in the Tower, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada.

[3] The folio has, "our *dear* plots." To *pall* was to *fade* or *fall away*; to become, as it were, dead, or without spirit: from the old French *pasler*. Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—

"I'll never follow thy *pall'd* fortunes more."

I have adopted Mr. Tyrwhitt's arrangement of this passage. It is quite evident that *rashly* must be joined in construction with *up from my cabin*, and Hamlet's doings recorded in his next speech.

Hor. That is most certain.)

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown[4] scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;
Finger'd their packet: and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
O royal knavery! an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,—
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs[5] and goblins in my life,—
That, on the supervise[6], no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

Hor. Ay, 'beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villains,
Ere[7] I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play;—I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists[8] do,

[4] Malone has told us that the *sea-gown* appears to have been the usual dress of seamen in Shakespeare's time; we may gather from Cotgrave what it was like. "Esclavine, a sea-gowne, a coarse high collar'd and shortsleeved gowne, reaching to the mid-leg, and used mostly by seamen and sailors."

[5] *With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life*, i. e. *with such causes of terror arising from my character and designs. Bugs* were no less terrific than goblins. We now call them *bugbears.*

[6] *On the supervise, no leisure bated. The supervise* is *the looking over; no leisure bated* means *without any abatement* or *intermission of time.*

[7] The quarto has *or* instead of *ere*, in the same sense of *before.*

[8] *Statists* are *statesmen.* Blackstone says, that "most of our great men of Shakespeare's time wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones." This must be taken with some quali-

A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service[9]: Wilt thou know
Th' effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a co-mere[10] 'tween their amities
And many such like as's of great charge,—
That, on the view and know of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd[11].

Hor. How was this seal'd?

fication; for Elizabeth's two most powerful ministers, Leicester and Burleigh, both wrote good hands. It is certain that there were some who did write most wretched scrawls, but probably not from affectation; though it was accounted a mechanical and vulgar accomplishment to write a fair hand. The worst and most unintelligible scrawls I have met with, are Sir Richard Sackville's, in Elizabeth's time; and the miserable scribbling of Secretary Conway, of whom James said they had given him a secretary that could neither write nor read.

[9] *Yeoman's service* I take to be *good substantial service.* The ancient yeomen were famous for their staunch valour in the field; and Sir Thomas Smyth says, they were "the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France."

[10] The old copies read, "stand a *comma* 'tween their amities." Johnson supposes that the meaning may be, "Stand as a *comma*, i. e. as a note of connexion between their amities, to prevent them from being brought to a *period.* But think of *Peace* standing as a *comma!* I have no doubt that we should read:—

"And stand a *co-mere* 'tween their amities,"

i. e. *as a mark defining them. Mere* is *a boundary mark*, the *lapis terminalis* of the ancients; and it should be remembered that the god of *meres* or bounds, Terminus, was wont to end the strifes and controversies of people in dividing their lands.

[11] *Not shriving time allow'd*, that is, *without allowing time for the confession of their sins.* It was a phrase in common use for any short period.

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant;
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal:
Folded the writ up in form of th'other;
Subscrib'd it; gave't th'impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known: Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent[12]
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon[13]?
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between th'election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage; is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim's mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,

[12] The folio here misprints *sement* for *sequent*, and, three lines lower, *debate* for *defeat*.

[13] "Does it not seem to you *incumbent upon me* to requite him, &c." Vide note upon King Richard II. Act ii. Sc. 3, vol. iv. p. 418. The last three lines of this speech and the three following speeches are not in the quartos.

That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court[14] his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here?

Enter OSRIC[15].

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly[16]?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'Tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold: the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot; or my complexion——

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry[17],—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how:—My lord, his majesty

[14] The folio has, "I'll *count* his *favours*." Rowe corrected it.

[15] The quarto of 1604, "*Enter a Courtier.*" That of 1603, "*Enter a braggart Gentleman.*"

[16] In Troilus and Cressida, Thersites says, "How the poor world is pestered with such *water-flies*; diminutives of nature." The gnats and such like ephemeral insects are not inapt emblems of such busy triflers as Osric.

[17] *Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry.*

"Igniculum brumæ si tempore poscas,
Accipit endromidem; si dixeris, æstuo, sudat."—*Juvenal.*

bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember——

[HAMLET *moves him to put on his Hat.*

[*Osr.* Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith[18]. Sir, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences[19], of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card[20] or calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent[21] of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you;—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory, and it[22] but yaw neither in respect of his quick sail. But in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth[23] and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirrour; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

[18] The folio omits this and the following fourteen speeches; and in their place substitutes, "Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon." It seems as if this dialogue was intended to ridicule the affected Euphuism prevalent among those shallow wits about the court, who mistook it for refinement.

[19] i. e. *distinguishing excellencies.*

[20] "The *card* or *calendar* of gentry." The general preceptor of elegance; the *card* (chart) by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the *calendar* by which he is to order his time.

[21] "You shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see." *You shall find him containing* and comprising every *quality* which a *gentleman* would desire to *contemplate* for imitation. Perhaps we should read, "You shall find him the continent." But it may be superfluous to aim at the meaning of Osric's affected jargon.

[22] The folios have, "and *yet* but *raw*." The quarto of 1604 has *yaw*. *Yet* was often printed instead of *it*, which was sometimes written *yt*. A *yaw* is that unsteady motion which a ship makes in a great swell, when in steering she inclines to the right or left of her course.

[23] *Dearth*, according to Tooke, is "the third person singular

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really[24].

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant——

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me[25].—Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is——

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should com-

of the verb *to dere;* it means some cause which *dereth*, i. e. maketh dear; or hurteth, or doth mischief." That *dearth* was, therefore, used for *scarcity*, as well as *dearness*, appears from the following passage in a MS. petition to the council, by the merchants of London, 6 Edw. VI.: speaking of the causes of the *dearness* of *cloth* they say, "This detriment cometh through the *dearth* of wool, the procurers whereof being a few in number for the augmentation of the same."—*Conway papers.* See vol. i. p. 463, note 4.

[24] *Is it not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.* This interrogatory remark is very obscure. The sense may be, "Is it not possible for this fantastic fellow to understand in plainer language? You will, however, imitate his jargon admirably, really, sir." It seems very probable that "another tongue" is an error of the press for "*mother* tongue."

[25] "If you did, it would not *tend* much *toward proving* me or *confirming* me." What Hamlet would have added we know not; but surely Shakespeare's use of the word *approve*, upon all occasions, is against Johnson's explanation of it—"*to recommend to approbation.*" There is no consistency in the commentators; they rarely look at the prevalent sense of a word in the poet, but explain it many ways, to suit their own views of the meaning of a passage.

pare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself[26].

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed[27] he's unfellowed.]

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed[28], as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers[29], and so: Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

[*Hor.* I knew, you must be edified by the margent[30] ere you had done.]

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german[31] to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I

[26] *I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him,* &c. *i. e.* I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom.

[27] *Meed* is *merit.* Vide King Henry VI. Part III. Act ii. Sc. 1.

[28] *Imponed.* The quartos read *impauned.* Pignare, in Italian, signifies both to *impawn* and *to lay a wager.* The *stakes* are, indeed, a *gage* or *pledge.* *Imponed,* may only be meant to mark Osric's affected enunciation of *impawned.*

[29] *Hangers,* that part of the belt by which the sword was suspended.

[30] *The margent.* The gloss or commentary in old books was usually on the *margin* of the leaf. This speech is not in the folio.

[31] i. e. *be more nearly related.* "Those that are *german* to him, though fifty times removed, shall come under the hangman."—*The Winter's Tale.* It is remarkable that this word has also become equally obsolete in French; but Montaigne uses it like Shakespeare for *propinquity.* "La naïveté n'est elle pas, selon nous, *germaine* à la sottise."

would, it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish: Why is this imponed, as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits[32]; he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing[33] runs away with the shell on his head.

[32] The conditions of the wager are thus given in the quarto of 1603:—

"Marry, sir, that young Leartes in twelve venies
At rapier and dagger, do not get three odds of you."

[33] *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.* Horatio means to call Osric a raw, unfledged, foolish fellow. It was a common comparison for a forward fool. Thus in Meres's Wits Treasury, 1598:—"As the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head, as soon as she is hatched," &c.

"Forward lapwing,
He flies with the shell on his head."—*Vittoria Corombona.*

Ham. He did comply[34] with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he (and many more of the same bevy[35], that, I know, the drossy age dotes on), only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter[36]; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fann'd and winnowed opinions[37]; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

[*Enter a* Lord[38].

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow

[34] *He did comply with his dug*, i. e. *he did compliment with or embrace his dug, before he sucked it.* See note 47, on Act ii. Sc. 2, p. 192.

[35] The folio reads, "*mine* more of the same bevy." *Mine* is evidently a misprint, and more likely for *manie* (i. e. many) than *nine*. The quarto of 1604 reads, "*many* more of the same *breed*."

[36] *Outward habit of encounter* is *exterior politeness of address.*

[37] "A kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most *fanned* and *winnowed* opinions," &c. The folio reads, "*fond* and winnowed." The corruption of the quarto, "*prophane* and *trennowed*," is not worth attention; and I have no doubt that *fond* in the folio should be *fanned*, formerly spelt *fan'd*, and sometimes even without the apostrophe. Fanned and winnowed are almost always coupled by old writers, for reasons that may be seen under those words in Baret's Alvearie. So Shakespeare himself in Troilus and Cressida:—

"Distinction with a broad and powerful *fan*,
Puffing at all, *winnows* the light away."

The meaning is, "These men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them through with the most light and inconsequential judgments; but if brought to the trial by the slightest breath of rational conversation, the bubbles burst; or, in other words, display their emptiness."

[38] All that passes between Hamlet and this Lord is omitted in the folio.

the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit* Lord.]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. Thou wouldst not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,——

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving[39], as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestall their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows; what is't to leave betimes[40]? Let be.

[39] i. e. *misgiving,* a *giving against,* or *an internal feeling and prognostic of evil.*

[40] *Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows; what is't to leave betimes?* This is the reading of the quarto, 1604; the folio reads, "Since no man *ha's* ought *of what* he leaves. What is't to leave betimes," and omits *Let be. Ha's* is evidently here a blunder for *knows.* Johnson thus interprets the passage:—"Since *no man knows ought* of the state which *he leaves,* since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should we be afraid of *leaving* life betimes?" Warburton's explanation is very ingenious, but perhaps strains the poet's meaning farther than he intended. "It is true that by death we lose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we are sensible of it; and since death removes all sense of it, what matters it

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, *and* Attendants, *with Foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The* King *puts the hand of* LAERTES *into that of* HAMLET.

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I have done you wrong;
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence[41] knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With a sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception,
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it then? His madness: If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience[42],
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother[43].

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,

how soon we lose them." This argument against the fear of death has been dilated and placed in a very striking light by the late Mr. Green.—See *Diary of a Lover of Literature, Ipswich*, 1810, 4to. p. 230. Shakespeare himself has elsewhere said, "the sense of death is most in apprehension."

[41] i. e. *the king and queen.*

[42] This line is not in the quarto.

[43] In the folios the word is *mother.*

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
I stand aloof; and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd[44]. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come; one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds[45] o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both:—
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

[44] i. e. *unwounded.* This is a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's apology. The folio misprints *ungorg'd.*

[45] The king had wagered *six Barbary horses* to a few *rapiers, poniards,* &c. that is, about *twenty* to one. These are the *odds* here meant. The odds the King means in the next speech were *twelve* to *nine* in favour of Hamlet, by Laertes giving him three.

King. Set me the stoups[46] of wine upon that table :—
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire :
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union[47] shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn ; Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
Now the king drinks to Hamlet.—Come, begin ;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgement.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

[46] *Stoup* is a common word in Scotland at this day, and denotes a pewter vessel resembling our wine measures; but of no determinate quantity: for there are *gallon-stoups, pint-stoups, mutchkin-stoups*, &c. The vessel in which water is fetched or kept is also called a *water-stoup*. A *stoup* of wine is therefore equivalent to a *mug* of wine.

[47] An *union* is a precious pearl, remarkable for its size. "And hereupon it is that our dainties and delicates here at Rome, &c. call them unions, as a man would say singular, and by themselves alone." To swallow a pearl in a draught seems to have been common to royal and mercantile prodigality. Thus in the second part of If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody:—

> "Here sixteen thousand pound at one clap goes
> Instead of sugar. Gresham *drinks this pearl*
> Unto the queen his mistress."

According to Rondeletus pearls were supposed to have an exhilarating quality. "*Uniones* quæ a conchis, &c. valde *cordiale* sunt." Under pretence of throwing a pearl into the cup, the King may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet subsequently asks him tauntingly, "Is the *union* here?"

Laer. Well,—again.

King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound; and Cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it[a] by awhile.
Come.—Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath[48].—
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good madam,——

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord;—I pray you, pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup! it is too late.

[*Aside.*

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Laer. And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

[*Aside.*

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: You but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence;
I am afeard, you make a wanton[49] of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

[a] The folio omits *it*, and the quarto "*a touch, a touch,*" just below.

[48] It appears from the Epitaph on Burbage that he was celebrated for his performance of Hamlet:—

"No more young Hamlet, though but scant of breath,
Shall cry revenge for his dear father's death."

And it has been conjectured that the words have reference to the obesity of the actor. The folio reads, "Here's a napkin; rub thy brows."

[49] i. e. *you trifle or play with me as if I were a child.* The quarto has "I am *sure.*"

Osr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[LAERTES *wounds* HAMLET; *then, in scuffling, they change Rapiers, and* HAMLET *wounds* LAERTES.

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again. [*The* Queen *falls.*

Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides;—How is't, my lord?

Osr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!
The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd! [*Dies.*

Ham. O villainy!—Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! seek it out. [LAERTES *falls.*

Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good,
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated[50], and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me: lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd;
I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point
Envenom'd too!—Then, venom to thy work[51].
[*Stabs the* King.

[50] See note on Act iv. Sc. 7.

[51] In the quarto of 1603:—

"The poison'd instrument within my hand?
Then venom to thy venom; die, damn'd villain:
Come drink, here lies thy union here." [King *dies.*

Osr. & Lords. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion:—Is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [King *dies.*
Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.—
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*
Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio:—Wretched queen, adieu!—
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time (as this fell sergeant[52], death,
Is strict in his arrest), O! I could tell you,—
But let it be:—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.
Hor. Never believe it;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here's yet some liquor left.
Ham. As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup; let go; by heaven, I'll have't.—
O God!—Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

[52] A *sergeant* was a *bailiff* or *sheriff's officer.* Shakespeare, in his 74th Sonnet, has likened death to an arrest:—

"When that fell *arrest,*
Without all bail shall carry me away."

And Joshua Silvester, in his Dubartas:—

"And *death, dread sergeant* of the eternal Judge,
Comes very late to his sole-seated lodge."

To tell my story.— [*March afar off, and Shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To th' ambassadors of England gives this warlike volley.

Ham. O! I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'ercrows[53] my spirit;
I cannot live to hear the news from England:
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice
So tell him, with th'occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited[54],—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart;—Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the* English Ambassadors, *and Others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?
Hor. What is it, you would see?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havock![55]—O proud death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,

[53] To *overcrow* is to *overcome*, to *subdue*. "These noblemen laboured with tooth and naile to *overcrow*, and consequently to overthrow one another."—*Holinshed's History of Ireland.*

[54] "The *occurrents* which have *solicited*"—the *occurrences* or *incidents* which have *incited*." The sentence is left unfinished.

[55] *This quarry cries on havock!* To *cry on* was to *exclaim against*. "I suppose when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to call it *havock*."—*Johnson.*

Quarry was the term used for a heap of slaughtered game. See Macbeth, Act iv. Sc. 3.

That thou so many princes, at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?
1 *Amb.* The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you;
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump[56] upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on[57] by cunning, and forc'd cause;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.
Fort. Let us haste to hear it.
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
I have some rights of memory[58] in this kingdom,
Which, now to claim, my vantage doth invite me.
Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently perform'd,

[56] It has been already observed that *jump* and *just*, or *exactly*, are synonymous. Vide note 10 on Act i. Sc. 1, p. 130.

[57] i. e. *instigated, produced.* Instead of "*forced* cause," the quartos read "*for no* cause."

[58] i. e. *some rights which are remembered in this kingdom.*

Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots and errors, happen.
Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldier's musick, and the rites of war,
Speak loudly for him.—
Take up the bodies:—Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead March.*

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead Bodies; after which, a Peal of Ordnance is shot off.*

THE following scene in the first quarto, 1603, differs so materially from the revised play, that it has been thought it would not be unacceptable to the reader:—

Enter HORATIO *and the* Queen.

Hor. Madam, your son is safe arriv'd in Denmark,
This letter I even now receiv'd of him,
Whereas he writes how he escap'd the danger,
And subtle treason that the king had plotted;
Being crossed by the contention of the winds,
He found the packet sent to the king of England,
Wherein he saw himself betray'd to death,
As at his next conversion with your grace
He will relate the circumstance at full.

Queen. Then I perceive there's treason in his looks,
That seem'd to sugar o'er his villainy:
But I will sooth and please him for a time,
For murderous minds are always jealous;
But know not you, Horatio, where he is?

Hor. Yes, madam, and he hath appointed me
To meet him on the east side of the city
To-morrow morning.

Queen. O fail not, good Horatio, and withal commend me
A mother's care to him, bid him a while
Be wary of his presence, lest that he
Fail in that he goes about.

Hor. Madam, never make doubt of that:
I think by this the news be come to court
He is arriv'd: observe the king, and you shall
Quickly find, Hamlet being here,
Things fell not to his mind.

Queen. But what became of Gilderstone and Rossencraft

Hor. He being set ashore, they went for England,
And in the packet there writ down that doom
To be perform'd on them 'pointed for him:—
And by great chance he had his father's seal,
So all was done without discovery.

Queen. Thanks be to heaven for blessing of the prince.
Horatio, once again I take my leave,
With thousand mother's blessings to my son.

Hor. Madam, adieu.

KING LEAR.



Cordelia. Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides:
Who cover faults, at last with shame derides.
Well may you prosper!
France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

ACT i. SC. 1.

KING LEAR.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE story of King Lear and his three daughters was originally told by Geffrey of Monmouth, from whom Holinshed transcribed it; and in his Chronicle Shakespeare had certainly read it: but he seems to have been more indebted to the old anonymous play, printed by Simon Stafford for John Wright in 1605, under the following title of "The True Chronicle History of King Leir and his three Daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella. As it hath bene diuers and sundry times lately acted." It is reprinted in the Collection of Plays on which Shakespeare founded, published by Steevens in 1779; which was entered on the Stationers' books by Edward White, May 14, 1594; and there are two other entries of the same piece, May 8, 1605; and Nov. 26, 1607. From the Mirror of Magistrates Shakespeare has taken the hint for the behaviour of the Steward, and the reply of Cordelia to her father, concerning her future marriage. The episode of Gloucester and his sons must have been borrowed from Sidney's Arcadia, no trace of it being found in the other sources of the fable. The reader will also find the story of King Lear in the recently published Metrical Chronicle of Layamon; in the second book and tenth canto of Spenser's Faerie Queene, and in the fifteenth chapter of the third book of Warner's Albion's England. Camden, in his Remaines, under the head of Wise Speeches, tells a similar story to this of Lear, of Ina, king of the West Saxons; which, if the thing ever happened, probably was the real origin of the fable. The story has found its way into many ballads and other metrical pieces; one ballad will be found in Dr. Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, vol. i. 3d edit. The story is also to be found in the unpublished Gesta Romanorum, and in the Romance of Perceforest. The whole of this play could not have been written till after 1603. Harsnet's Declaration of Popish Impostures, to which it contains so many references, and from which the fantastic names of several spirits are borrowed, was not published till that year. It must have been produced before the Christmas of 1606; for in the entry of Lear on the Stationers' Register, on the 26th of Novem-

ber, 1607, it is expressly recorded to have been played, during the preceding Christmas, before his majesty at Whitehall. The entry is as follows:—"26 Nov. 1607. Na. Butter and Jo. Busby.] Entered for their copie and 'thands of Sir Geo. Bucke, Kt. and the Wardens, a booke called Mr. Willm. Shakespeare his Historye of Kinge Lear, as yt was played before the King's Majestie at Whitehall, upon St. Stephen's night at Christmas last, by his Majesties Servants playing usually at the Globe on the Bankside." Malone, therefore, with great probability, places the date of the composition in 1605.

An anonymous writer, who has instituted a comparison between the Lear of Shakespeare and the Œdipus of Sophocles, and justly given the palm to the former, closes his essay with the following sentence, to which every reader of taste and feeling will subscribe: —"There is no detached character in Shakespeare's writings which displays so vividly as this the hand and mind of a master; which exhibits so great a variety of excellence, and such amazing powers of delineation; so intimate a knowledge of the human heart, with such exact skill in tracing the progress and the effects of its more violent and more delicate passions. It is in the management of this character more especially that he fills up that grand idea of a perfect poet, which we delight to image to ourselves, but despair of seeing realised.*"

In the same work from whence this is extracted will be found an article, entitled "Theatralia," attributed to the pen of Charles Lamb, in which are the following striking animadversions on the liberty taken in changing the catastrophe of this tragedy in representation. "The Lear of Shakespeare cannot be acted. The contemptible machinery with which they mimic the storm he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements, than any actor can be to represent Lear. The greatness of Lear is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual: the explosions of his passions are terrible as a volcano; they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that rich sea, his mind, with all its vast riches: it is his mind which is laid bare. This case of flesh and blood seems too insignificant to be thought on; even as he himself neglects it. On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of age; while we read it we see not Lear, but we are Lear;—we are in his mind; we are sustained by a grandeur, which baffles the malice of his daughters and storms; in the aberrations of his reason, we discover a mighty irregular power of reasoning, unmethodised from the ordinary purposes of life, but exerting its powers, as the wind blows where it listeth, at will on the corruptions and abuses of mankind. What have looks or tones to do

* The Reflector, vol. ii. p. 139, on Greek and English Tragedy.

with that sublime identification of his age with that of *the heavens themselves*, when, in his reproaches to them for conniving at the injustice of his children, he reminds them that 'they themselves are old!' What gesture shall we appropriate to this? What has voice or the eye to do with such things? But the play is beyond all art, as the tamperings with it show: it is too hard and stony; it must have love-scenes, and a happy ending. It is not enough that Cordelia is a daughter, she must shine as a lover too. Tate has put his hook in the nostrils of this Leviathan, for Garrick and his followers, the showmen of the scene, to draw it about more easily. A happy ending!—as if the living martyrdom that Lear had gone through, the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him. If he is to live and be happy after, if he could sustain this world's burden after, why all this pudder and preparation—why torment us with all this unnecessary sympathy? As if the childish pleasure of getting his gilt robes and sceptre again could tempt him to act over again his misused station,—as if at his years, and with his experience, any thing was left but to die."

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LEAR, King *of* Britain.
KING *of* FRANCE.
DUKE *of* BURGUNDY.
DUKE *of* CORNWALL.
DUKE *of* ALBANY.
EARL *of* KENT.
EARL *of* GLOSTER.
EDGAR, *Son to* Gloster.
EDMUND, *Bastard Son to* Gloster.
CURAN, *a Courtier.*
Old Man, *Tenant to* Gloster.
Physician.
Fool.
OSWALD, *Steward to* Goneril.
An Officer, *employed by* Edmund.
Gentleman, *Attendant on* Cordelia.
A Herald.
Servants *to* Cornwall.

GONERIL,
REGAN.
CORDELIA, } *Daughters to* Lear.

Knights *attending on the* King, Officers, Messengers, Soldiers, *and* Attendants.

SCENE—Britain.

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Room of State in* King Lear's *Palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOSTER, *and* EDMUND.

Kent.

I THOUGHT the king had more affected the duke of Albany, than Cornwall.

Glo. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom[1], it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities[2] are so weigh'd, that curiosity[3] in neither can make choice of either's moiety[4].

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glo. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it.

Kent. I cannot conceive you.

Glo. Sir, this young fellow's mother could: where-

[1] Johnson is wrong in his view of this passage; what can be plainer than that Lear has predetermined the division of his kingdom, and only alters it when Cordelia disappoints and vexes him?

[2] The folio has *qualities.*

[3] *Curiosity* is *scrupulous exactness, finical precision.* See vol. viii. p. 331, note 43.

[4] *Moiety* is used by Shakespeare for *part* or *portion.* See King Henry IV. Part I. p. 75, note 7.

upon she grew round-womb'd; and had, indeed, sir, a son for her cradle, ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

Kent. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper[5].

Glo. But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair; there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.—Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glo. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving.

Glo. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again.—The king is coming.

[*Trumpets sound within.*

Enter LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloster.

Glo. I shall, my liege[6].

[*Exeunt* GLOSTER *and* EDMUND.

Lear. Mean time we shall express our darker[7] purpose.

[5] *Proper* is *comely, handsome.* See Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act iv. Sc. 1, note 1.

[6] The folio has *lord.*

[7] *We shall express our darker purpose;* that is "'we have already made known our desire of parting the kingdom; we will now discover what has not been told before, the reasons by which we shall regulate the partition.' This interpretation will justify or palliate the exordial dialogue."—*Johnson.*

Give me the map there.—Know, that we have divided,
In three, our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent[8]
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring[9] them on younger strengths, while we
Unburden'd crawl toward death.—Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will[10] to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
And here are to be answer'd.—Tell me, my daughters
(Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state[11]),
Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge.—Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour:
As much as child e'er loved, or father found.
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable:
Beyond all manner of so much I love you[12].

[8] i. e. *our determined resolution.* The quartos read, "*first* intent."

[9] The quartos read, *confirming.*

[10] *Constant will,* which is a confirmation of the reading "*fast* intent," means a *firm, determined will:* it is the *certa voluntas* of Virgil. The lines from *while we* to *prevented now* are omitted in the quartos.

[11] The two lines in a parenthesis are omitted in the quartos.

[12] "Beyond all assignable quantity. I love you beyond limits, and cannot say it is *so much*; for how much soever I should name,

Cor. What shall Cordelia do?[13] Love, and be silent. [*Aside.*

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd[14],
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: To thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual.—What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. I am made of that self metal as my sister,
And prize me at her worth[15]. In my true heart
I find, she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short,—that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most spacious sphere[16] of sense possesses;
And find, I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.

Cor. Then poor Cordelia! [*Aside.*
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer[17] than my tongue.

Lear. To thee, and thine, hereditary ever,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity[18], and pleasure,

it would yet be more." Thus Rowe, in his Fair Penitent, Sc. 1:—

"I can only
Swear you reign here, *but never tell how much.*"

[13] The folio has, *speak.*

[14] i. e. *enriched.* So Drant in his translation of Horace's Epistles, 1567:—

"To *ritch* his country, let his words lyke flowing water fall."

[15] That is, *estimate* me at her *value*, my love has at least equal claim to your favour. Only she comes short *of me in this*, that I profess myself an enemy to all other joys which sense can bestow."

[16] The quartos have, "Which the most *precious square* of sense possesses." The folio misprints *professes* for *possesses.* The correction was made by me before I had seen the notes from Mr. Collier's corrected folio, which suggest *sphere* for *square*, but leave the corruption of *precious* for *spacious* untouched.

[17] The folio, "More *ponderous.*"

[18] *Validity* is several times used to signify *worth*, *value*, by Shakespeare. It does not, however, appear to have been peculiar

Than that conferr'd[19] on Goneril.—Now, our joy,
Although our last, and least[20]; to whose young love
The vines of France, and milk of Burgundy,
Strive to be interess'd[21]: what can you say, to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

Cor. Nothing, my lord.

Lear. Nothing?

Cor. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing: speak again.

Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; no more, nor less.

Lear. How, how, Cordelia? mend your speech a little,
Lest it[22] may mar your fortunes.

Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I
Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say,
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,

to him in this sense. "The countenance of your friend is of less value than his council, yet both of very small *validity*."—*The Devil's Charter*, 1607.

[19] The folio reads, *conferr'd*; the quartos, *confirm'd*. So in a former passage we have in the quartos *confirming* for *conferring*. See note 9, p. 325.

[20] Thus the folio. The quartos have:—

"Although the last not least in our dear love,
What can you say to win a third more opulent
Than your sisters?"

[21] To *interest* and to *interesse* are not, perhaps, different spellings of the same verb, but two distinct words, though of the same import; the one being derived from the Latin, the other from the French *interesser*. We have *interess'd* in Ben Jonson's Sejanus:—

"Our sacred laws and just authority
Are *interess'd* therein."

Drayton also uses the word in the Preface to his Polyolbion.

[22] Thus the quartos. The folios read, "Lest *you* may;" and in Lear's former speech, "Nothing *will* come of nothing."

That lord, whose hand must take my plight, shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care, and duty[23]:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
[To love my father all[24].]

Lear. But goes thy heart with this?

Cor. Ay, good my lord.

Lear. So young, and so untender?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so,—Thy truth then be thy dow'r:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries[a] of Hecate, and the night;
By all the operation of the orbs,
From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation[25] messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and reliev'd,
As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath:
I lov'd her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery.—Hence, and avoid my sight!—
[*To* CORDELIA.

[23] So in The Mirror for Magistrates, 1587, Cordelia says:—

"Nature so doth bind me, and compel
To love you as I ought, my father, well;
Yet shortly may I chance, if fortune will,
To find in heart to bear another more good will:
Thus much I said of nuptial loves that meant."

[24] This hemistich is not in the folio. In the next line the quarto reads, "But goes this with thy heart."

[a] So the second folio. The quarto misprints *mistresse*; the folio, *miseries*.

[25] i. e. *his children*.

So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her!—Call France.—Who
stirs?
Call Burgundy.—Cornwall, and Albany,
With my two daughters' dow'rs digest this third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,
Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty.—Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of a hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain[a]
The name, and all the addition[26] to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest[27],
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part between you. [*Giving the Crown.*
Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers[28],—
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the
shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What would'st thou do, old man?
Think'st thou, that duty shall have dread to speak,
When pow'r to flatt'ry bows? To plainness honour's
bound
When majesty stoops to folly. Reserve thy state[29];

[a] In this line the folio prints *turne*, and *shall* for *still*.

[26] *All the titles belonging to a king.* The quartos have, *additions*. See vol. vii. p. 158, note 5; p. 208, note 34.

[27] By *the execution of the rest*, all the other functions of the kingly office are probably meant.

[28] The allusion seems to be to the custom of clergymen praying for their patrons in what is called the bidding prayer.

[29] The quarto reads, "*Reverse thy doom*; and has "*falls* to

And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgement,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted, whose low sounds
Reverb[30] no hollowness.

Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.

Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thine enemies[31], nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.

Lear. Out of my sight!

Kent. See better, Lear, and let me still remain
The true blank[32] of thine eye.

Lear. Now, by Apollo,—

Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal! miscreant![a]

[*Laying his Hand on his Sword.*

Alb. Corn. Dear sir, forbear.

Kent. Do;

folly." The meaning of *answer my life my judgment* is, Let my life be answerable for my judgment, or *I will stake my life on my opinion.*

[30] This is perhaps a word of the poet's own, meaning the same as *reverberate.* The quarto has *sound* and *reverbs.*

[31] That is, "I never regarded my life as my own, but merely as a thing of which I had the possession, not the property; and which was entrusted to me as a pawn or pledge, to be employed in *waging* war against your enemies. "To *wage*," says Bullokar, "to *undertake*, or give security for performance of any thing."

The expression to *wage against* is used in a Letter from Guil. Webbe to Robt. Wilmot, prefixed to Tancred and Gismund, 1592: —"You shall not be able to *wage against* me in the charges growing upon this action. Geo. Wither, in his verses before the Polyolbion, says:—

"Good speed befall thee who hath *wag'd* a task
That better censures and rewards doth ask."

[32] The *blank* is the *mark* at which men shoot. "See better," says Kent, "and let me be the mark to direct your sight, that you err not."

[a] The quarto has *recreant*, and omits the words, *Dear sir, forbear.* In Kent's speech it has *doom* for *gift*, the reading of the folio.

Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon the foul disease. Revoke thy gift;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee, thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant[b]! On thine allegiance hear me!—
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
(Which we durst never yet), and, with strain'd pride,
To come betwixt our sentence and our power
(Which nor our nature nor our place can bear);
Our potency made[33] good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision
To shield thee from diseases[34] of the world;
And, on the sixth, to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! By Jupiter,
This shall not be revok'd.

Kent. Fare thee well, king: since thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom[35] lives hence, and banishment is here.—

[b] The quartos omit *recreant*. The folio has *That* instead of *Since* in the next line.

[33] "As you have with unreasonable pride come between our *sentence* and our *power to execute it;* that *power* shall be *made good* by rewarding thy contumacy with a sentence of banishment." In Othello we have nearly the same language:—

"My *spirit* and my *place* have in them *power*
To make this bitter to thee."

One of the quartos reads, "*make* good."

[34] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, *disasters*. By the *diseases* of the world are the *uneasinesses, inconveniences,* and slighter *troubles* or *distresses* of the world. So in King Henry VI. Part I. Act ii. Sc. 5:—

"And in that ease I'll tell thee my *disease*."

The provision that Kent could make in five days might in some measure guard against such *diseases* of the world, but could not shield him from its *disasters*.

[35] The quartos read, "*Friendship*." And in the next line, instead of "*dear shelter*," "*protection*."

The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
[*To* CORDELIA.
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!—
And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
[*To* REGAN *and* GONERIL.
That good effects may spring from words of love.—
Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Re-enter GLOSTER; *with* FRANCE, BURGUNDY, *and* Attendants.

Glo. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.
Lear. My lord of Burgundy,
We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: What, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love[36]?
Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than hath your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.
Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n: Sir, there she stands;
If aught within that little, seeming[37] substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure piec'd,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She's there, and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Sir,
Will you, with those infirmities she owes[38],

[36] That is, *your amorous pursuit.* A *quest* is a *seeking* or *pursuit:* the expedition in which a knight was engaged is often so named in the Faerie Queene.

[37] *Seeming* here means *specious.* Thus in The Merry Wives of Windsor:—"Pluck the borrowed veil of modesty from the so *seeming* mistress Page."

[38] i. e. *owns,* is *possessed of.*

Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd[a] with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?

Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up[39] on such conditions.

Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the pow'r that made me,
I tell you all her wealth.—For you, great king,
[*To* FRANCE.
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way,
Than on a wretch whom nature is asham'd
Almost t'acknowledge hers.

France. This is most strange!
That she, whom[b] even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
The best, the dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour! Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,
That monsters it[40], or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall into taint[41]: which to believe of her,

[a] The quarto has *cover'd.*

[39] That is "Election *is not accomplished* on such conditions," I cannot decide to take her upon such terms.

[b] The quarto has *that;* and just below, "*most* best, *most* dearest."

[40] "*Such* unnatural degree
That monsters it."

In the phraseology of Shakespeare's age *that* and *as* were convertible words. So in Coriolanus:—

"But with *such* words *that* are but rooted in
Your tongue."

See Julius Cæsar, Act i. Sc. 2, p. 373, note 15. The uncommon verb *to monster* occurs again in Coriolanus, Act ii. Sc. 2:—

"To hear my nothings *monster'd.*"

[41] *i. e.* Her offence must be monstrous, or the former affection which you professed for her must *fall into taint;* that is, *become the subject of reproach. Taint* is here only an abbreviation of *attaint.*

Must be a faith, that reason without miracle
Could never plant in me.

Cor. I yet beseech your majesty
(If for[42] I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak), that you make known
It is no vicious blot, nor other foulness,
No unchaste[43] action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath depriv'd me of your grace and favour:
But even for want of that, for which I am richer;
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
That I am glad I have not, though not to have it,
Hath lost me in your liking.

Lear. Better thou[a]
Hadst not been born, than not to have pleas'd me better.

France. Is it but this? a tardiness in nature,
Which often leaves the history unspoke,
That it intends to do?—My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love is not love,
When it is mingled with respects[44], that stand
Aloof from th'entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.

Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself propos'd,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.

Bur. I am sorry then, you have so lost a father,

[42] i. e. *If cause I want*, &c.

[43] The quartos read, "no *unclean* action," and in the preceding line *murther or* is misprinted in the old copies for *nor other*.

[a] Before these words the quarto has, "Go to, go to," and just after, "Is it *no more* but this."

[44] i. e. *with cautious and prudential considerations*. The folio has *regards*. The meaning of the passage is, that his love wants something to mark its sincerity:—

"Who seeks for aught in love but love alone."

That you must lose a husband.

Cor. Peace be with Burgundy!
Since that respects of fortune[a] are his love,
I shall not be his wife.

France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most lov'd, despis'd!
Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon:
Be it lawful, I take up what's cast away.
Gods, gods! 'tis strange, that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflam'd respect.—
Thy dow'rless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France:
Not all the dukes of wat'rish Burgundy
Shall buy this unpriz'd precious maid of me.—
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind:
Thou losest here, a better where[45] to find.

Lear. Thou hast her, France: let her be thine; for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again:—Therefore be gone,
Without our grace, our love, our benizon.—
Come, noble Burgundy.

[*Flourish.* *Exeunt* LEAR, BURGUNDY, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GLOSTER, *and* Attendants.

France. Bid farewell to your sisters.

Cor. The jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you; I know you what you are:
And, like a sister, am most loath to call
Your faults, as they are nam'd. Use well our father:
To your professed[46] bosoms I commit him:

[a] The folio has, "respect *and* fortune."

[45] *Here* and *where* have the power of nouns. "Thou losest this residence, to find a better residence in another place." So in Churchyard's Farewell to the World, 1592:—

"That growes not *here*, takes roote in other-*where*."

[46] We have here *professed* for *professing*. It has been elsewhere

But yet, alas! stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So farewell to you both.

Gon. Prescribe not us our duties.

Reg. Let your study
Be, to content your lord; who hath receiv'd you
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted[47].

Cor. Time shall unfold what plighted[48] cunning hides;
Who cover-faults[49] at last with shame derides.
Well may you prosper!

France. Come, my fair Cordelia.

[*Exeunt* FRANCE *and* CORDELIA.

Gon. Sister, it is not a little I have to say, of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think, our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

observed that Shakespeare often uses one participle for another. Thus in the Merchant of Venice, Act iii. Sc. 2, note 11, we have guil*ed* for guil*ing*; in other places delight*ed* for delight*ing*, &c. A remarkable instance of the converse occurs in Antony and Cleopatra; where we have all-obey*ing* for all-obey*ed*. In the preceding line the folio has, "*Love* well our father," instead of *Use*.

[47] Thus the folio. The quartos read:—

"And well are worth the *worth* that you have wanted.

The meaning of the passage, as it now stands in the text, is, "You well deserve to want that dower, which you have lost by having failed in your obedience." So in King Henry VI. Part III. Act iv. Sc. 1:—"Though I *want* a kingdom;" *i. e.* though I am *without* a kingdom.

[48] That is, *complicated, intricate, involved, cunning.*

[49] The quartos read:—

"Who *covers* faults, at last *shame them* derides."

The folio has:—

"Who *covers* faults, at last *with shame* derides."

I have no doubt we should read *cover*-faults, i. e. *dissemblers*, and that the meaning is, *Time* shall unfold what cunning duplicity hides, *who* (Time) at last derides such dissemblers with shame, by unmasking them." Mason proposed to read:—

"Who *covert* faults at last with shame derides."

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgement he hath now cast her off, appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engrafted condition[50], but therewithal, the unruly waywardness that infirm and cholerick years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him, as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. 'Pray you, let us hit[a] together: If our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think of it.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat[51].

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A Hall in the* Earl of Gloster's *Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *with a Letter.*

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess[1]; to thy law
My services are bound; Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague[2] of custom; and permit

[50] i. e. *temper; qualities of mind confirmed by long habit.* Thus in Othello:—

"A woman of so gentle a *condition.*

[a] The folio has, "let us *sit* together."

[51] i. e. *We must strike while the iron's hot.*

[1] Edmund calls *nature* his goddess, for the same reason as we call a bastard a natural son: one who, according to the law of nature, is the child of his father; but, according to those of civil society, is *nullus filius.*

[2] *i. e.* "Wherefore should I submit tamely to the plague (i. e. the

The curiosity[3] of nations to deprive[4] me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
More composition and fierce quality,
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake?—Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund,
As to the legitimate: Fine word,—legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate[5]. I grow; I prosper:—
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Kent banish'd thus! And France in choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscrib'd[6] his power!

evil), or injustice of custom?" Shakespeare had perhaps the sense of the Latin *plaga* in his mind.

[3] The *nicety* of civil institutions, their *strictness* and *scrupulosity*. See note 3, on the first scene.

[4] To *deprive* is equivalent to *disinherit*. *Exhæredo* is rendered by this word in the old dictionaries: and Holinshed speaks of the line of Henry before *deprived*.

Hanmer observes that "Edmund inveighs against the tyranny of custom in two instances, with respect to younger brothers and to bastards. In the former he must not be understood to mean himself, but the argument becomes general by implying more than is said, *Wherefore should I, or any man.*"

[5] The folio, "Shall *to*' th' legitimate." The quarto, "Shall *too*th' legitimate." The emendation is by Edwards.

[6] To *subscribe* is to *yield*, to *surrender*. So in Troilus and Cressida, vol. vii. p. 254:—

Confin'd to exhibition[7]! All this done
Upon the gad[8]!—Edmund! How now? what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none.
[*Putting up the Letter.*

Glo. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glo. No? What needed then that terrible despatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: Come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'erread; for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your o'erlooking.

Glo. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glo. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay[9] or taste of my virtue.

Glo. [*Reads.*] "This policy and reverence of age, makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us, till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond[10] bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it

"For Hector in his blaze of wrath *subscribes*
To tender objects."

[7] *Exhibition* is an *allowance*, a *stipend*.

[8] i. e. *in haste*, equivalent to *upon the spur*. A *gad* was a sharp pointed piece of steel, used as a spur to urge cattle forward; whence *goaded* forward. Mr. Nares suggests that to *gad* and *gadding* originate from being on the spur to go about.

[9] *As an essay*, &c. means *as a trial* or *taste of my virtue*. "To *assay*, or rather *essay*, of the French word *essayer*," says Baret; and a little lower: "To *taste* or *assay* before; *prælibo*."

[10] i. e. *weak and foolish*.

hath power, but as it is suffer'd. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, Edgar." —Humph—Conspiracy!—" Sleep till I waked him —you should enjoy half his revenue,"—My son Edgar!—Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in?—When came this to you? Who brought it?

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord, there's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glo. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not.

Glo. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but, I hope, his heart is not in the contents.

Glo. Hath he never before[11] sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: But I have often heard him maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining[a], the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glo. O villain, villain!—His very opinion in the letter!—Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish!—Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him:—Abominable villain!—Where is he?

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother, till you can derive from him better testimony

[11] The quartos have *heretofore.*

[a] The folio has *declin'd.*

of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where[12], if you violently proceed against him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath writ this to feel my affection to your honour[13], and to no other pretence[14] of danger.

Glo. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glo. He cannot be such a monster.

[*Edm.* Nor is not, sure.

Glo. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him.—Heaven and earth[15]!]—Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him[16], I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom: I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution[17].

[12] *Where* for *whereas.*

[13] The usual address to a lord.

[14] i. e. *design* or *purpose.*

[15] The words between brackets are omitted in the folio.

[16] *Wind me into him.* Another example of familiar expressive phraseology not unfrequent in Shakespeare. See vol. iii. p. 141, note 1.

[17] *I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution,* means, *I would give all that I am possessed of, both rank and fortune, to be satisfied of the truth.* So in The Four Prentices, Reed's Old Plays, vol. viii. p. 92:—

"Ah, but the *resolution* of thy death
Made me to lose such thought."

Shakespeare frequently uses *resolved* for *satisfied.* And in the third act of Massinger's Picture, Sophia says:—

"I have practis'd
For my certain *resolution,* with these courtiers."

And in the last act she says:—

"Nay, more, to take
For the *resolution* of his fears, a course
That is, by holy writ, denied a Christian."

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey[18] the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glo. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: Though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects[19]: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked between son and father. [This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: Machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves[20]!]—Find out this villain, Edmund, it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully:—And the noble and true-hearted Kent banish'd! his offence, honesty!—Strange! strange!

[*Exit.*

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world[21]! that, when we are sick in fortune (often the surfeit of our own behaviour), we make guilty of our disasters, the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity: fools, by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers[22] by spherical predominance;

[18] To *convey* is to *conduct*, or *carry through*.

[19] That is, "though natural philosophy can give account of eclipses, yet we feel their consequences."

[20] All between brackets is omitted in the quartos.

[21] Warburton, in a long and ingenious note on this passage, observes that in this play the dotages of a judicial astrology are intended to be satirized. It was a very prevailing folly in the poet's time.

[22] *Treachers* is the reading of the folio, which is countenanced by the use of the word in many of our old dramas. Chaucer, in his Romaunt of the Rose, mentions "the false *treacher*;" and Spenser many times uses the same epithet. The quartos all read *treacherers*.

drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence: and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on: An admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star[23]! My father compounded with my mother under the dragon's tail; and my nativity was under *ursa major;* so that it follows, I am rough and lecherous.—Tut, I should have been that I am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar—

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes, like the catastrophe of the old comedy[24]: My cue is villainous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o'Bedlam.—O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi[25].

Edg. How now, brother Edmund? What serious contemplation are you in?

[23] So Chaucer's Wife of Bath (v. 6196):—

"I followed ay min inclination
By vertue of my *constellation.*"

Bernardus Sylvestris, an eminent philosopher and poet of the twelfth century, very gravely tells us in his Megacosmus, that:—

"In stellis Codri paupertas, copia Crœsi
Incestus Paridis, Hippolytique pudor."

[24] Perhaps this was intended to ridicule the very awkward conclusions of our old comedies, where the persons of the scene make their entry inartificially, and just when the poet wants them on the stage.

[25] "Shakespeare shows by the context that he was well acquainted with the property of these syllables in solmisation, which imply a series of sounds so unnatural that ancient musicians prohibited their use. The monkish writers on music say *mi contra fa, est diabolus:* the interval *fa mi*, including a *tritonus* or sharp fourth, consisting of three tones without the intervention of a semi-tone, expressed in the modern scale by the letters F G A B, would form a musical phrase extremely disagreeable to the ear. Edmund, speaking of eclipses as portents and prodigies, compares the dislocation of events, the *times being out of joint*, to the unnatural and offensive sounds *fa so' la mi.*"—*Dr. Burney.*

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself with that?

Edm. I promise you[26], the effects he writes of, succeed unhappily: [as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts[27], nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come;] when saw you my father last?

Edg. Why, the night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him, by word or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself, wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty, forbear his presence, till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a con-

[26] "The folio edition commonly differs from the first quarto, by augmentations or insertions, but in this place it varies by the omission of all between brackets. It is easy to remark that in this speech, which ought, I think, to be inserted as it now is in the text, Edmund, with the common craft of fortunetellers, mingles the past and the future, and tells of the future only what he already foreknows by confederacy, or can attain by probable conjecture."—*Johnson.*

[27] For *cohorts* some editors read *courts.* A reading approved by Johnson.

tinent[28] forbearance, till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: 'Pray you, go; there's my key;—If you do stir abroad, go arm'd.

Edg. Arm'd, brother?

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best: I am no honest man, if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard, but faintly; nothing like the image and horror of it: 'Pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business.—

[*Exit* EDGAR.

A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none; on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy!—I see the business.—
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet, that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *A Room in the* Duke of Albany's *Palace.*

Enter GONERIL *and* Steward.

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle;—When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him: say, I am sick:—

[28] *Continent*, i. e. *temperate*.

If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

Stew. He's coming, madam; I hear him.

[*Horns within.*

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'd have it come to question:
If he distaste[1] it, let him to my sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
[Not to be over-rul'd. Idle old man[2],
That still would manage those authorities,
That he hath given away!—Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be us'd
With checks, as flatteries,—when they are seen abus'd[3].]
Remember what I have said.

Stew. Well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you;
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:
[I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak[4]:]—I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my course:—Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *A Hall in the same.*

Enter Kent, *disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech diffuse[1], my good intent

[1] The quarto has *dislike.*

[2] This line and the four following are not in the folio. Theobald observes that they are fine in themselves, and much in character for Goneril.

[3] I take the meaning of this passage to be "Old men are babes again, and must be accustomed to checks as well as flatteries, especially when the latter are seen to be abused by them."

[4] The words in brackets are found in the quartos, but omitted in the folio.

[1] To *diffuse* here means to *disguise*, to render it *strange*, to *ob-*

May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I raz'd[2] my likeness. — Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master[3], whom thou lov'st,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. *Enter* LEAR, Knights, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner: go, get it ready. [*Exit an* Attendant.] How now, what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? What would'st thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse[4] with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgement; to fight when I cannot choose: and to eat no fish[5].

scure it. See vol. v. p. 408, note 5, and Merry Wives of Windsor, p. 273, note 6. We must suppose that Kent advances looking on his disguise. This circumstance very naturally leads to his speech, which otherwise would have no apparent introduction.

[2] *Raz'd*, i. e. *effaced.*

[3] We must understand, "So may it come, *that* thy master," &c.

[4] To *converse* signifies immediately and properly to *keep company*, to have *commerce* with. His meaning is, "that he chooses for his companions men of reserve and caution; men who are not tattlers nor talebearers.

[5] It is not clear how Kent means to make the *eating no fish* a recommendatory quality, unless we suppose that it arose from the odium then cast upon the papists, who were the most strict observers of periodical fasts, which though enjoined to the people under the protestant government of Elizabeth, were not very palatable or strictly observed by the commonalty. Marston's Dutch Courtezan says, "I trust I am none of the wicked that *eat fish* a Fridays." I cannot think with Mr. Blakeway, who says that Kent means to insinuate that he never desires to partake of *fish* because

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What would'st thou?

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who would'st thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance, which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing; nor so old, to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me, if I like thee no worse after dinner; I will not part from thee yet.—Dinner, ho, dinner;—Where's my knave? my fool? Go you, and call my fool hither:

Enter Steward.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter?

it was esteemed a *luxury!* and therefore incompatible with his situation as an humble and discreet dependant. The repeated promulgation of mandates from the court for the better observation of *fish days* disproves this. I have before me a Letter of Archbishop Whitgift, in 1596, strictly enjoining the clergy of his diocess to attend to the observance of the fasts and *fish days* among their respective parishioners, and severely animadverting upon the refractory spirit which disposed them to eat flesh out of due season contrary to law.

Stew. So please you,— [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clot-poll back.—Where's my fool, ho?—I think the world's asleep.—How now? where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I call'd him?

Knight. Sir, he answer'd me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgement, your highness is not entertain'd with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears, as well in the general dependants, as in the duke himself also, and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! say'st thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent, when I think your highness is wrong'd.

Lear. Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception; I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity[6], than as a very pretence[7] and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into't.—But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away[8].

[6] By *jealous curiosity* Lear appears to mean a *punctilious jealousy* resulting from a scrupulous watchfulness of his own dignity. See the third note on the first scene of this play.

[7] *A very pretence* is an *absolute design.* So in a former scene, "to no other *pretence* of danger."

[8] "This is an endearing circumstance in the Fool's character, and creates such an interest in his favour as his wit alone might have failed to procure for him."—*Steevens.*

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well.—Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her.—Go you, call hither my fool.

Re-enter Steward.

O, you sir, you sir, come you hither: Who am I, sir?

Stew. My lady's father.

Lear. My lady's father! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Stew. I am none of this, my lord; I beseech you, pardon me.

Lear. Do you bandy[9] looks with me, you rascal? [*Striking him.*

Stew. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripp'd neither; you base foot-ball player. [*Tripping up his Heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away; I'll teach you differences: away, away: If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away: go to: Have you wisdom? so. [*Pushes the* Steward *out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service. [*Giving* KENT *Money.*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too;—Here's my coxcomb. [*Giving* KENT *his Cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave? how dost thou?

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool[10]?

[9] A metaphor from tennis. "Come in and take this *bandy* with the racket of patience."—*Decker's Satiromastix.* "To *bandy* a ball" Cole defines *clava pilam torquere;* "To *bandy* at tennis," *reticulo pellere.* "To *bandy* blows" is still a common idiom.

[10] The folio gives this speech to Lear; and prints, "Why, my boy?"

Fool. Why? For taking one's part that's out of favour: Nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly[11]. There, take my coxcomb: Why, this fellow has banish'd two of his daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will: if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb[12].—How now, nuncle[13]? 'Would, I had two coxcombs, and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy?

Fool. If I gave them all my living[14], I'd keep my coxcombs myself: There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog that must to kennel: he must be whipp'd out, when lady, the brach[15], may stand by the fire, and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

[11] i. e. *be turned out of doors and exposed to the inclemency of the weather.*

[12] The reader may see a representation of this ornament of the fool's cap in Mr. Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare, vol. ii. "Natural ideots and fools have, and still do accustome themselves to weare in their cappes cockes feathers, or a hat *with a necke and heade of a cocke on the top*, and a bell thereon."—*Minsheu's Dictionary*, 1617.

[13] A familiar contraction of *mine uncle*, as *ningle*, &c. It seems that the customary appellation of the old licensed fool to his superiors was *uncle*. In Beaumont and Fletcher's Pilgrim, when Alinda assumes the character of a fool, she uses the same language. She meets Alphonso, and calls him *nuncle;* to which he replies by calling her *naunt*. In the same style it appears the fools called each other cousin. *Mon oncle* was long a term of respect and familiar endearment in France, as well as *ma tante*. They have a proverb, "Il est bien *mon oncle*, qui le ventre me comble." It is remarkable, observes Mr. Vaillant, that the lower people in Shropshire call the judge of assize "my *nuncle* the judge."

[14] i. e. *all my estate or property.*

[15] It has already been shown that *brach* was a *mannerly* name for a *bitch*. See vol. iii. p. 120, note 7. So Hotspur, in The Second Part of King Henry IV. says:—"I would rather hear *lady* my *brach* howl in Irish."

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:—

Have more than thou showest,
Speak less than thou knowest,
Lend less than thou owest[16],
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest[17],
Set less than thou throwest,
Leave thy drink and thy whore,
And keep in-a-door,
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent This is nothing, fool[18].

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for't; Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. 'Pr'ythee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to; he will not believe a fool.

[*To* KENT.

Lear. A bitter fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

Lear. [No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord, that counsel'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,—
Do thou for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool

[16] That is, "*do not lend all that thou hast.*" To *owe* in ancient language is to *possess.*

[17] To *trow* is to *believe.* The precept is admirable. *Set* in the next line means *stake.*

[18] In the quartos this speech is assigned to Lear.

Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, 'faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't: and ladies[19] too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching.]—Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i'the middle, and eat up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i'the middle, and gav'st away both parts, thou bor'st thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt: Thou had'st little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gav'st thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipp'd that first finds it so.

Fools had ne'er less grace in a year[20]; [*Singing.*
For wise men are grown foppish;
And know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

[19] The quartos erroneously print *lodes* for *ladies.* The fool evidently refers to Lear's daughters. The passage in brackets is omitted in the folio, perhaps for political reasons, as it seemed to censure the monopolies, the gross abuses of which, and the corruption and avarice of the courtiers, who went shares with the patentee, were objects of satire more legitimate than safe.

[20] *i. e.* "There never was a time when fools were less in favour; and the reason is, that they were never so little wanted, for wise men now supply their place." In Mother Bombie, a Comedy, by Lyly, 1594, we find "I think gentlemen *had never less wit in a year.*" It is remarkable that the quartos read "less *wit,*" instead of "less *grace,*" which is the reading of the folio.

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mother: for when thou gavest them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches,

Then they for sudden joy did weep, [*Singing.*
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among[21].

Pr'ythee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie; I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipp'd.

Fool. I marvel, what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me whipp'd for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipp'd for lying; and, sometimes, I am whipp'd for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind of thing, than a fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o'both sides, and left nothing in the middle: Here comes one o'the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet[22] on?
Methinks you are too much of late i'the frown.

[21] So in the Rape of Lucrece, by Heywood, 1608:—
"When Tarquin first in court began,
And was approved king,
Some men *for sodden joy gan weep,*
And I for sorrow sing."

[22] A *frontlet*, or *forehead cloth*, was worn by ladies of old to prevent wrinkles. So in George Chapman's Hero and Leander, *ad finem*:—
"E'en like the *forehead cloth* that in the night,
Or when they sorrow ladies us'd to wear."
Thus also in Zepheria, a collection of Sonnets, 4to. 1594:—
"But now, my sunne, it fits thou take thy set
And vayle thy face with *frownes* as with a *frontlet.*"
And in Lyly's Euphues and his England, 1580:—"The next day

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow, when thou had'st no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure: I am better than thou art now; I am a fool, thou art nothing.—Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue! so your face [*To* GON.] bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.

That's a sheal'd peascod[23]. [*Pointing to* LEAR.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licens'd fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on[24]
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep;
Which in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For you trow, nuncle,

The hedge sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had its head bit off by its young.

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling[25].

coming to the gallery where she was solitary, walking, with her *frowning cloth*, as sicke lately of the sullens," &c.

[23] Now a mere husk that contains nothing. The robing of Richard II.'s effigy in Westminster Abbey is wrought with *peascods open*, and the *peas out*; perhaps an allusion to his being once in full possession of sovereignty, but soon reduced to an empty title. See Camden's Remaines, 1674, p. 453, edit. 1657, p. 340.

[24] *Put it on*, that is *promote it*, push it forward. *Allowance* is *approbation*.

[25] "Shakespeare's fools are certainly copied from the life. The originals he copied were no doubt men of quick parts; lively

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir,
I would you would make use of that good wisdom,
Whereof I know you are fraught, and put away
These dispositions, which of late transform you
From what you rightly are[26].

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Does any here know me?—Why, this is not Lear: does Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes? Either his notion weakens, or his discernings are lethargied.—Sleeping or waking?—Ha! sure 'tis not so.—Who is it that can tell me who I am[27]?

and sarcastick. Though they were licensed to say any thing, it was still necessary, to prevent giving offence, that every thing they said should have a playful air: we may suppose therefore that they had a custom of taking off the edge of too sharp a speech by covering it hastily with the end of an old song, or any glib nonsense that came into their mind. I know no other way of accounting for the incoherent words with which Shakespeare often finishes this fool's speeches."—*Sir Joshua Reynolds.* In a very old drama, entitled The Longer thou Livest the more Foole thou art, printed about 1580, we find the following stage direction:—"Entreth Moros, counterfaiting a vaine gesture and a foolish countenance, *singing the foote of many songs, as fools were wont.*"

[26] In the quarto this speech is printed as prose. The folio omits, "Come, sir."

[27] This passage has been erroneously printed in some late editions, "Who is it can tell me who I am?" says Lear. In the folio the reply, "Lear's shadow," is rightly given to the Fool, but the latter part of the speech of Lear is omitted in that copy. Lear heeds not what the Fool replies to his question, but continues:—"Were I to judge from the marks of sovereignty, of knowledge, or of reason, I should be induced to think I had daughters, yet that must be a false persuasion;—it cannot be—." The Fool seizes the pause in Lear's speech to continue his interrupted reply to Lear's question: he had before said, "You are Lear's shadow;" he now adds, "which they (*i. e.* your daughters) will make an obedient father." Lear heeds him not in his emotion, but addresses Goneril with "Your name, fair gentlewoman." It is remarkable that the continuation of Lear's speech, and the

Fool. Lear's shadow,—

Lear. [I would learn that; for by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. —Which they will make an obedient father.]

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour[28]
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:
As you are old and reverend, you should be wise:
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd[29], and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel,
Than a grac'd palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: Be then desir'd
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train:
And the remainder, that shall still depend[30]
To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!—
Saddle my horses; call my train together.—
Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee;
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble

continuation of the Fool's comment, is omitted in the folio copy, which by other omissions prints the first part as verse, for which it does not seem to be intended.

[28] The old copies have distinctly *savour*, which has been unnecessarily changed to *favour*. Thus in King Henry V. Act i. Sc. 1:— "You *savour* too much of your youth."

[29] *Debosh'd.* See Tempest, Act iii. Sc. 2, note 1.

[30] i. e. *continue in service.* So in Measure for Measure:—
"Canst thou believe thy living is a life,
So stinkingly *depending*."

Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents[31],—O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? [*To* ALB.] Speak, sir.—Prepare my horses.
Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous, when thou show'st thee in a child,
Than the sea-monster[32]!
Alb. 'Pray, sir, be patient.
Lear. Detested kite! thou liest: [*To* GONERIL.
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know:
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name.—O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
Which, like an engine[33], wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate that let thy folly in.
[*Striking his Head.*
And thy dear judgement out.—Go, go,—my people!
Alb. My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant

[31] One of the quarto copies reads, "*We* that too late *repents us.*" The others, "*We* that too late repents." The words, "O, sir, are you come?" are not in the folio. This may have been suggested by The Mirrour for Magistrates:—

"They call him doting foole, all his requests debarr'd.
Demanding if with life he were not well content:
Then he *too late his rigour did repent*
Gainst me." *Story of Queen Cordelia.*

[32] The *sea monster* is the *hippopotamus*, the hieroglyphical symbol of impiety and ingratitude. Sandys, in his Travels, says "that he killeth his sire and ravisheth his own dam."

[33] By an *engine* the *rack* is here intended. So in The Night Walker, by Beaumont and Fletcher:—

"Their souls shot through with adders, torn on *engines.*"

Of what hath mov'd you.

Lear. It may be so, my lord.—
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate[34] body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart[35] disnatur'd torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks:
Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits[36],
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is[37]
To have a thankless child!—Away, away! [*Exit.*

Alb. Now, gods, that we adore, whereof comes this?

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause[38];
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers, at a clap!
Within a fortnight?

Alb. What's the matter, sir?

[34] *Derogate* here means *degenerate, degraded.*

[35] *Thwart* as a noun adjective is not frequent in our language. It is to be found, however, in Promos and Cassandra, 1578:—

"Sith fortune *thwart* doth crosse my joys with care."

Disnatured is *wanting natural affection.* So Daniel, in Hymen's Triumph, 1623:—"I am not so *disnatur'd* a man."

[36] "*Pains* and *benefits*," in this place, signify maternal *cares* and *good offices.*

[37] So in Psalm cxl. 3:—"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adder's poison is under their lips." The viper was the emblem of ingratitude.

[38] The folio reads, "to know more of it."

Lear. I'll tell thee;—Life and death! I am asham'd
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus:
[*To* GONERIL.
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them.—Blasts and fogs upon thee!
The untented[39] woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee!—Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out;
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay.—
Ha! let it be so[40]:—I have another daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable;
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolfish visage. Thou shalt find,
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever[41].
[*Exeunt* LEAR, KENT, *and* Attendants

Gon. Do you mark that?

Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you,—

Gon. 'Pray you, content.—What, Oswald, ho!
You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.
[*To the* Fool.

Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry, and take the fool with thee.

[39] The *untented woundings* are the *rankling* or *never healing wounds* inflicted by a parental malediction. *Tents* are well known dressings inserted into wounds as a preparative to healing them. Shakespeare quibbles upon this surgical practice in Troilus and Cressida:—

Patr. Who keeps the *tent* now?

Ther. The surgeon's box, or the patient's *wound.*"

[40] The words, "is it come to this?" are here added in the quarto.

[41] The words, "thou shalt, I warrant thee," are here added in the quarto.

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter;
So the fool follows after. [*Exit.*

Gon.[42] [This man hath had good counsel:—A hundred knights!
'Tis politick, and safe, to let him keep
At point[43] a hundred knights. Yes, that on every dream,
Each buz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their pow'rs,
And hold our lives in mercy.] Oswald, I say!—

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far:
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be harm'd[44]. I know his heart:
What he hath utter'd, I have writ my sister;
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd the unfitness.—

Enter Steward.

How now, Oswald?
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Stew. Ay, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own,
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return. [*Exit* Stew.] No, no, my lord,

[42] All within brackets is omitted in the quartos.

[43] *At point.* See Macbeth, Act iv. Sc. 3, note [a], p. 93.

[44] The old copies have, "Nor fear still to be *taken*." But it is evident that the context requires *harm'd*. The compositor's eye glancing on the preceding line, he has put *taken* for the proper word.

This milky gentleness, and course of yours,
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd[45] for want of wisdom,
Than prais'd for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce, I cannot tell;
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then—

Alb. Well, well; the event. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *Court before the same.*

Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloster with these letters: acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know, than comes from her demand out of the letter: If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there before you[1].

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have de'ivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in his heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

[45] The folio reads *at task*, one of the quartos *attask'd*, the others have *alapt*, which occurs in the Sixe-folde Politician, attributed to Milton's father. The work *task* is frequently used by Shakespeare and his contemporaries in the sense of *tax*. Goneril means to say, that he was more taxed for want of wisdom, than praised for mildness. So in The Island Princess of Beaumont and Fletcher, Quisana says to Ruy Dias:—

"You are too saucy, too impudent,
To *task* me with these errors."

[1] The word *there* in this speech shows that when the king says, "Go you before to *Gloster*," he means the town of Gloster, which Shakespeare chose to make the residence of the Duke of Cornwall, to increase the probability of their setting out late from thence on a visit to the Earl of Gloster. Our old English earls usually resided in the counties from whence they took their titles. Lear, not finding his son-in-law and his wife at home, follows them to the Earl of Gloster's castle.

Fool. Then, I pr'ythee, be merry; thy wit shall not go slip-shod[a].

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see, thy other daughter will use thee kindly[2]; for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this, as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst not[3] tell, why one's nose stands in the middle of his face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep his eyes on either side his nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong[4]:—

Fool. Can'st tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature.—So kind a father! —Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven, is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

[a] *i. e.* "For you show you have no wit in undertaking your present journey."

[2] The Fool quibbles, using the word *kindly* in two senses; as it means *affectionately*, and like the rest of her *kind*, or after their *nature*.

[3] The folios have, "Thou canst tell why ones nose stands i' th' middle on's face?" "No,"—"Why to keep ones eyes of either side's nose."

[4] He is musing on Cordelia.

Fool. Yes, indeed: Thou would'st make a good fool.

Lear. To take't again perforce[5]!—Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'd have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that?

Fool. Thou should'st not have been old, before thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! Keep me in temper; I would not be mad!—

Enter Gentleman.

How now! Are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy.

Fool. She that is maid now, and laughs at my departure,
Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter[6].

[*Exeunt.*

[5] The subject of Lear's meditation is the resumption of that moiety of the kingdom he had bestowed on Goneril. This was what Albany apprehended, when he replied to the upbraidings of his wife:—"Well, well; the event." What Lear himself projected when he left Goneril to go to Regan:—

"Thou shalt find
That *I'll resume the shape, which thou dost think*
I have cast off for ever."

And what Curan afterwards refers to, when he asks Edmund:—"Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?"

[6] *i. e.* "She who thinks that the journey we are now starting on will better us and bring us mirth, is such a simpleton, that if she is a maid now, she will be cheated before long of her claim to the title."

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Court within the Castle of the* Earl *of* Gloster.

Enter EDMUND *and* CURAN, *meeting.*

Edmund.

SAVE thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father; and given him notice, that the Duke of Cornwall, and Regan his duchess, will be here with him to-night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not: You have heard of the news abroad; I mean, the whisper'd ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments[1]?

Edm. Not I; 'Pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward[2], 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany?

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! Best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business!
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy[3] question,

[1] *Ear-kissing arguments* means *that they are yet in reality only whispered ones.*

[2] This and the following speech are omitted in the quarto B.

[3] *Queasy* appears to mean here *delicate, unsettled.* So Ben Jonson, in Sejanus:—

"These times are rather *queasy* to be touched.—
Have you not seen or read part of his book?"

Queasy is still in use to express that sickishness of stomach which the slightest disgust is apt to provoke.

Which I must act:—Briefness, and fortune, work!—
Brother, a word; descend:—Brother, I say;

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches:—O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night:—
Have you not spoken 'gainst the duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' the haste,
And Regan with him; Have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the duke of Albany[4]?
Advise[5] yourself.

Edg. I am sure on't, not a word.

Edm. I hear my father coming,—pardon me:—
In cunning, I must draw my sword upon you:—
Draw: Seem to defend yourself: Now quit you well.
Yield:—come before my father;—Light, ho, here!—
Fly, brother;—Torches! torches!—So, farewell.—
[*Exit* EDGAR.
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[*Wounds his Arm.*
Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport[6].—Father! Father!
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter GLOSTER, *and* Servants *with Torches.*

Glo. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon

[4] *i. e.* "Have you said nothing upon the party formed by him against the Duke of Albany?"

[5] i. e. *consider, recollect yourself.*

[6] These drunken feats are mentioned in Marston's Dutch Courtezan:—"Have I not been drunk for your health, eat glasses, drunk wine, *stabbed arms*, and done all offices of protested gallantry for your sake?"

To stand his auspicious mistress [7]:—

Glo. But where is he?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.

Glo. Where is the villain, Edmund?

Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could—

Glo. Pursue him, ho!—Go after.—[*Exit* Serv.] By no means,—what?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend [8];
Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father;—Sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanc'd [9] mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,
Or whether gasted [10] by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Glo. Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught,
And found—despatch. The noble duke my master,
My worthy arch [12] and patron, comes to-night:

[7] This was a proper circumstance to urge to Gloster; who appears to have been very superstitious with regard to this matter, if we may judge by what passes between him and his son in a foregoing scene.

[8] Thus the first quarto; the folio has "the thunder."

[9] The folio *latch'd*, the quarto *launch'd*, evidently for *launced*. The same orthography is used by Spenser and Dryden.

[10] *Gasted*, that is, *aghasted*, *frighted*. Thus in Beaumont and Fletcher's Wit at Several Weapons:—"Either the sight of the lady has *gasted* him, or else he's drunk."

[12] i. e. *chief*; a word now only used in composition, as *arch-angel*, *arch-duke*, &c. So in Heywood's If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody:—"Poole, that *arch* of truth and honesty."

By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him, shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech[13];
I threaten'd to discover him: He replied,
"Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal[14]
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd! No: what I should deny,
(As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character[15]), I'd turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs[16]
To make thee seek it."

Glo. Strong and fasten'd villain;
Would he deny his letter?—I never got him[17].

[*Trumpets within.*

[13] "And found him *pight* to do it, with *curst* speech." *Pight* is *pitched, fixed, settled; curst* is *vehemently angry, bitter.*

"Therefore my heart is surely *pight*
Of her alone to have a sight."

Lusty Juventus, 1561.

"He did with a very *curste* taunte, checke, and rebuke the feloe."—*Erasmus's Apophthegmes, by N. Udal*, fo. 47.

[14] i. e. *Would any opinion that men have reposed in thy trust, virtue, &c.* The old quarto reads, "*could* the *reposure*."

[15] i. e. *My hand-writing, my signature.* See Merry Wives of Windsor, Act v. Sc. 5, note 9.

[16] The folio reads, "potential *spirits*." And in the next line but one, "*O strange* and fasten'd villain." *Strong* is *determined, resolute.* Our ancestors often used it in an ill sense; as *strong* thief, *strong* hore, &c.

[17] Instead of "I never got him" the folio reads "said he?" and *wher* instead of *why* in the next line. The folio is very incorrectly printed in this part. Below, it has *strangeness* for *strange ewes.*

Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes[a]:—
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;
The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable[18].

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend! since I came hither (Which I can call but now), I have heard strange news.

Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short, Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord?

Glo. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, it's crack'd!

Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life? He whom my father nam'd? your Edgar?

Glo. O lady, lady, shame would have it hid!

Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights That tend upon my father?

Glo. I know not, madam: 'Tis too bad, too bad.

Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.

Reg. No marvel then, though he were ill affected; 'Tis they have put him on the old man's death, To have th'expense and waste of his revenues. I have this present evening from my sister Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions, That, if they come to sojourn at my house, I'll not be there.

Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.—

[a] The folio has, "I know not *wher* he comes;" most probably a construction for *wherefore*.

[18] i. e. *capable of succeeding to my land, notwithstanding the legal bar of thy illegitimacy.*

"The king next demanded of him (he being a fool) whether he were *capable* to inherit any land," &c.—*Life and Death of Will Somers*, &c.

Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.

Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.

Glo. He did bewray his practice[19], and receiv'd
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued?

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,
How in my strength you please.—For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours;
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.

Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glo. For him I thank your grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,—

Reg. Thus out of season; threading dark-ey'd night.
Occasions, noble Gloster, of some poize[20],
Wherein we must have use of your advice:—
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home[21]; the several messengers
From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.

Glo. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.*

[19] "He did *bewray* his *practice*." That is, "He did *betray* or *reveal* his *treacherous devices*." So in the second book of Sidney's Arcadia:—"His heart fainted and gat a conceit, that with *bewraying* his *practice* he might obtain pardon." The quartos read *betray*.

[20] i. e. "of some *weight* or *moment*." The folio and one quarto read *prize*. The preceding line ought probably to be given to *Cornwall*.

[21] That is *not at home, but at some other place*.

SCENE II. *Before* Gloster's *Castle.*

Enter KENT *and* Steward, *severally.*

Stew. Good dawning[1] to thee, friend: Art of the house?

Kent. Ay.

Stew. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I' the mire.

Stew. 'Pr'ythee, if thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Stew. Why, then I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold[2], I would make thee care for me.

Stew. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not.

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Stew. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal, an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited[3], hun-

[1] The quartos read, "good *even.*" *Dawning* is used again in Cymbeline, as a substantive, for *morning.* It is clear from various passages in this scene, that the morning is just beginning to dawn.

[2] i. e. *Lipsbury pound.* "*Lipsbury pinfold*" may, perhaps, like *Lob's pound,* be a coined name; but with what allusion does not appear.

[3] "*Three-suited* knave" might mean, in an age of ostentatious finery like that of Shakespeare, one who had no greater change of raiment than *three suits* would furnish him with. So in Ben Jonson's Silent Woman:—"Wert a pitiful fellow, and hadst nothing but *three suits* of apparel." *A one-trunk-inheriting* slave may be a term used to describe a fellow, the whole of whose possessions were confined to one coffer, and that too *inherited* from his father, who was no better provided, or had nothing more to bequeath to his successor in poverty; *a poor rogue hereditary,* as Timon calls Apemantus. A *worsted-stocking knave* is another reproach of the same kind. The stockings in England in the reign of Elizabeth were remarkably expensive. Yet Stubbes, in his Anatomie of Abuses, says, "those who have not above forty shil-

dred-pound, filthy worsted-stocking knave; a lily-liver'd, action-taking knave; a whoreson, glass-gazing, super serviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one that would'st be a bawd, in way of good-service, and art nothing but the composition of a knave, beggar, coward, pandar, and the son and heir of a mongrel bitch: one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deny'st the least syllable of thy addition[4].

Stew. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one, that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee!

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou know'st me! Is it two days ago, since I tripp'd up thy heels, and beat thee, before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine[5] of you: Draw, you whoreson cullionly barber-monger[6], draw.

[*Drawing his Sword.*

Stew. Away; I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters

lings a year wages, will not stick to have two or three pair of these silk nether stocks, or else of the finest yarn that may be got, though the price of them be a ryall or twenty shillings." In an old comedy, called The Hog hath Lost its Pearl, by R. Tailor, 1614, it is said:—"Good parts are no more set by, than a good leg in a *woollen stocking*." This term of reproach, as well as that of a *hundred pound gentleman*, occurs in The Phœnix, by Middleton. *Action-taking knave* is a fellow who, if you beat him, would bring an action for the assault instead of resenting it like a man of courage.

[4] i. e. *thy titles.* The description of a person in legal documents is called his *addition.*

[5] An equivoque is here intended, by an allusion to the old dish of *eggs in moonshine*, which was eggs broken and boiled in salad oil till the yolks became hard. It is equivalent to the phrases of modern times, "I'll *baste you*," or "*beat you to a mummy*."

[6] *Barber-monger* may mean *dealer with the lower tradesmen*; a slur upon the Steward, as taking fees for a recommendation to the business of the family.

against the king; and take vanity the puppet's[7] part, against the royalty of her father: Draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks:—draw, you rascal: come your ways.

Stew. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave[8], strike. [*Beating him.*

Stew. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND, CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, *and* Servants.

Edm. How now? What's the matter? Part.

Kent. With you, goodman boy, if you please; come, I'll flesh you; come on, young master.

Glo. Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives;
He dies, that strikes again: What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Stew. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirr'd your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in[9] thee, a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir; a stone-cutter, or a painter, could not have made him so ill, though they had been but two hours at the trade[10].

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

[7] *Puppet* is here merely a term of contempt for a female.

[8] *Neat slave* may mean, *you base cowherd*, or it may mean, as Steevens suggests, you *finical* rascal, you assemblage of *foppery and poverty*. See Cotgrave, in *Mirloret, Mistoudin, Mondinet*; by which Sherwood renders a *neate fellow*.

[9] To *disclaim in*, for *to disclaim* simply, was the phraseology of the poet's age. See Gifford's Ben Jonson, vol. iii. p. 264.

[10] The folio has, "but two *years*."

Stew. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have
spar'd,
At suit of his gray beard,—

Kent. Thou whoreson zed[11]! thou unnecessary letter!—My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted[12] villain into mortar, and daub the wall of a jakes with him.—Spare my gray beard, you wagtail!

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords atwain
Which are too intrinse[13] t'unloose: smooth every passion[14]
That in the natures of their lords rebels;

[11] *Zed* is here used as a term of contempt, because it is the last letter in the English alphabet: it is said to be an unnecessary letter, because its place may be supplied by S. Baret omits it in his Alvearie, affirming it to be rather a syllable than a letter. And Mulcaster says, "Z is much harder amongst us, and seldom seen. S is become its *lieutenant-general.* It is lightlie (*i. e.* hardly) expressed in English, saving in foren enfranchisements."

[12] *Unbolted* is *unsifted;* and therefore signifies this *coarse* villain. Massinger, in his New Way to Pay Old Debts, Act i. Sc. 1, says:—

"I will help your memory,
And *tread thee into mortar.*"

Unbolted mortar is mortar made of unsifted lime; and therefore to break the lumps it is necessary to tread it by men in wooden shoes.

[13] The quartos read, *intrench;* the folio, *t'intrince.* Perhaps *intrinse,* for so it should be written, was put by Shakespeare for *intrinsecate,* which he has used in Antony and Cleopatra:—

"Come, mortal wretch,
With thy sharp teeth this knot *intrinsecate*
Of life at once untie."

[14] See Pericles, Act i. Sc. 2, note 9.

Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege[15], affirm, and turn their halcyon[16] beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
As knowing nought, like dogs, but following.—
A plague upon your epileptick visage![17]
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'd drive ye cackling home to Camelot[18].

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Glo. How fell you out?
Say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy,
Than I and such a knave[19].

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What is his fault[20]?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, or his, or hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain;
I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,

[5] To *renege* is to *deny*. See Antony and Cleopatra, Sc. 1, note 1. The folio misprints it *Reuenge*, and *Being* for *Bring* in the preceding line.

[16] The bird called the kingfisher, which, when dried and hung up by a thread, is supposed to turn his bill to the point from whence the wind blows. So in Marlowe's Jew of Malta, 1633:—

"But how now stands the wind?
Into what corner peers my *halcyon's bill*."

"A lytle byrde called the Kings Fysher, being hanged up in the ayre by the neck, his nebbe or byll wyll be always direct or strayght against y^e^ winde."—*Book of Notable Things.*

[17] i. e. *a visage distorted by grinning.*

[18] In Somersetshire, near *Camelot*, are many large moors, where are bred great quantities of geese. It was the place where the romances say King Arthur kept his court in the west.

[19] Hence Pope's expression:—

"The strong antipathy of good to bad."

[20] Thus the folio. The quartos, "What's his *offence*?"

Who, having been prais'd for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness; and constrains the garb,
Quite from his nature[21]: He cannot flatter, he!—
An honest mind and plain,—he must speak truth:
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft, and more corrupter ends,
Than twenty silly[22] ducking observants,
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspéct[23],
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering[24] Phœbus' front,—

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you, in a plain accent, was a plain knave; which, for my part, I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to it[25].

Corn. What was the offence you gave him?

Stew. I never gave him any:
It pleas'd the king his master, very late,
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction:
When he, compact[26], and flattering his displeasure,

[21] "Forces his *outside*, or his appearance, to something totally *different from* his natural disposition."

[22] *Silly*, or rather *sely*, is *simple* or *rustic*. See Cymbeline, Act v. Sc. iii. note 9. *Nicely* here is with *scrupulous nicety, punctilious observance.*

[23] The quartos have, "*grand* aspect."

[24] This expressive word is now only applied to the *motion* and *scintillation* of flame. Dr. Johnson says that it means *to flutter*, which is certainly one of its oldest meanings, it being used in that sense by Chaucer. But its application is more properly made to the fluctuating scintillations of flame or light. In The Cuckoo, by Nicols, 1607, we have it applied to the eye:—

"Their soft maiden voice and *flickering* eye."

[25] *i. e.* "Though I should win you, displeased as you now are, to like me so well as to entreat me to be a knave."

[26] The quartos have, "conjunct;" both words mean *in concert with.*

Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king
For him attempting who was self-subdu'd;
And, in the fleshment[27] of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues, and cowards,
But Ajax is their fool[28].

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks, ho!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks:
As I've life and honour, there shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

[*Stocks brought out*

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour

[27] A young soldier is said to *flesh* his sword the first time he draws blood with it. *Fleshment*, therefore, is here metaphorically applied to the first act of service, which Kent, in his new capacity, had performed for his master; and at the same time, in a sarcastic sense, as though he had esteemed it an heroic exploit to trip a man behind who was actually falling.

[28] i. e. *Ajax is a fool to them.* "These rogues and cowards talk in such a boasting strain that, if we were to credit their account of themselves, Ajax would appear a person of no prowess when compared to them." So in King Henry VIII.—

"Now this mask
Was cry'd incomparable, and the ensuing night
Made it *a fool* and beggar."

Our sister speaks of:—Come, bring away the stocks[29].

Glo. Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
[His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for't: your purpos'd low correction
Is such, as basest and contemned'st wretches,
For pilferings and most common trespasses,
Are punish'd with:][30] the king must take it ill,
That he,—so slightly valu'd in his messenger,
—Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abus'd, assaulted,
[For following her affairs.—Put in his legs[31].]—

[KENT *is put in the Stocks.*

Come, my lord, away.

[*Exeunt all except* GLOSTER *and* KENT.

Glo. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd, nor stopp'd[32]; I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. 'Pray, do not, sir: I have watch'd, and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!

[29] This kind of exhibition was familiar to the ancient stage In Hick Scorner, which was printed in the reign of Henry VIII. Pity is put into the *stocks*, and left there until he is freed by Perseverance and Contemplacyon.

It should be remembered that formerly in great houses, as lately in some colleges, there were moveable *stocks* for the correction of the servants.

[30] The passage in brackets is not in the folio, which, in consequence of the omission, reads, "The king, his master, needs must take it ill."

[31] This line is also omitted in the folio which gives the words "Come, my lord away" to Cornwall.

[32] A metaphor from bowling.

Glo. The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken. [*Exit.*

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw[33]!

Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter!—Nothing almost sees miracles,
But misery;—I know 'tis from Cordelia;
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course;—and shall find time
From this enormous state,—seeking,—to give
Losses their remedies[34].—All weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night; smile once more; turn thy wheel!
[*He sleeps.*

[33] The *saw*, or proverb alluded to, is in Heywood's Dialogues on Proverbs, b. ii. c. v.—

"In your running from him to me *ye runne*
Out of God's blessing into the warme sunne."

i. e. *from good to worse.* Kent was thinking of the king being likely to receive a worse reception from Regan than that which he had already experienced from Goneril. See note on Much Ado about Nothing, Act ii. Sc. i. note 22.

[34] How much has been written about this passage, and how much it has been mistaken! Its evident meaning appears to me to be as follows:—Kent addresses the sun, for whose rising he is impatient, that he may read Cordelia's letter. "Nothing," says he, "almost sees miracles, but misery: I know *this letter which I hold in my hand* is from Cordelia; who hath most fortunately been informed of my disgrace and wandering in disguise," &c. He then finds he cannot follow his train of thought for weariness, and so breaks off and settles himself to sleep. I cannot imagine, with Mr. Collier, that it is meant to express the incoherent reading of a letter.

Scene III. *A Part of the Heath.*

Enter Edgar.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And, by the happy hollow of a tree,
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. While I may 'scape,
I will preserve myself: and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape,
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots[1];
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds, and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars[2], who, with roaring voices,

[1] Hair thus knotted was supposed to be the work of elves and fairies in the night. So in Romeo and Juliet:—

"Plats the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the *elf-locks* in foul sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes."

[2] Aubrey, in his MS. Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme, Part III. p. 234, b. (MS. Lansdowne, 226), says:—"Before the civil warrs, I remember *Tom a Bedlams* went about begging. They had been such as had been in *Bedlam*, and come to some degree of sobernesse; and when they were licenced to goe out, they had on their left arme an armilla of tinne printed, of about three inches breadth, which was sodered on."—*H. Ellis.*

Randle Holme, in his Academy of Arms and Blazon, b. iii. c. 3, gives the following description of a class of vagabonds feigning themselves mad:—"The *Bedlam* is in the same garb, with a long staff, and a cow or ox-horn by his side; but his cloathing is more fantastick and ridiculous; for being a mad-man, he is madly decked and dressed all over with rubins, feathers, cuttings of cloth, and what not; to make him seem a mad-man, or one distracted, when he is no other than a dissembling knave."

In The Bell-Man of London, by Decker, 5th edit. 1640, is another account of one of these characters, under the title of

Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks[3], nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting[4] villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatick bans[5], sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity.—Poor Turlygod[6]! poor Tom!
That's something yet; Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

Abraham Man:—"He sweares he hath been in Bedlam, and will talke frantickely of purpose: you see *pinnes* stuck in sundry places of his naked flesh, especially in his *armes*, which paine he gladly puts himselfe to, only to make you believe he is out of his wits. He calls himselfe by the name of *Poore Tom*, and, coming near any body, cries out, *Poor Tom is a-cold.* Of these *Abraham-men* some be exceeding merry, and doe nothing but sing songs fashioned out of their own braines: some will dance, others will doe nothing but either laugh or weepe: others are dogged, and so sullen both in looke and speech, that spying but a small company in a house they boldly and bluntly enter, *compelling* the servants through feare to give them what they demand." It is probable, as Steevens remarks, that to *sham Abraham*, a cant term still in use among sailors and the vulgar, may have this origin.

[3] i. e. *skewers:* the *euonymus*, or spindle tree, of which the best skewers are made, is called *prick-wood. Bare*, in the preceding line, is omitted in the folio; *mortified* being taken as a quadrisyllable.

[4] i. e. *paltry.* Vide vol. ii. p. 325, note 6.

[5] i. e. *curses.*

[6] *Turlygod*, an English corruption of *turluru*, Ital.; or *turelureau*, Fr.; both, among other things, signifying *a fool* or *madman.* It would perhaps be difficult to decide with certainty whether those words are corruptions of *turlupino* and *turlupin*; but at least it seems probable. The *Turlupins* were a fanatical sect, which overran the continent in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, calling themselves *Beghards* or *Beghins.* Their manners and appearance exhibited the strongest indications of lunacy and distraction; and their popular name, *Turlupins*, was probably derived from the *wolfish howlings* they made in their fits of religious raving. Genebrard thus describes them:—"Turlupin cynicorum sectam suscitantes, de nuditate pudendorum, et publico coitu." It has not been remarked that Cotgrave interprets "*Mon Turelureau*, My Pillicock, my pretty knave."

SCENE IV. *Before* Gloster's *Castle*[1].

Enter LEAR, Fool, *and* Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange, that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Mak'st thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! look! he wears cruel[2] garters! Horses are tied by the heads; dogs, and bears, by the neck; monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs: when a man is over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks[3].
Lear. What's he, that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?
Kent. It is both he and she,
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.

[1] See note 1, Act i. Sc. v. ante.

[2] A quibble on *crewell*, i. e. *worsted*. So in The Two Angry Women of Abingdon:—

"I'll warrant you, he'll have
His *cruell garters* cross about the knee."

[3] The old word for stockings; but the obvious allusion is to the stocks in which Kent is placed. This seems to show that Falstaff means a pun in his allusion to nether-stocks. Probably it was proverbially current.

Kent. I say, yea.
[*Lear.* No, no; they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.]
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay[4].
Lear. They durst not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder,
To do, upon respect, such violent outrage[5]:
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou might'st deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.
Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth,
From Goneril his mistress, salutations:
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission[6],
Which presently they read; on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny[7], straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend

[4] This dialogue being taken partly from the folio and partly from the quarto, is left without any metrical division, as it was not probably all intended to be preserved.

[5] *To do, upon respect, such violent outrage*, I think, means, "to do such violent outrage *deliberately*, or *upon consideration*." *Respect* is frequently used for *consideration* by Shakespeare. But perhaps, "To do such violent outrage upon the respect due to a privileged person," may be what is meant. I cannot think that it is intended for a personification, as Malone asserts.

[6] i. e. *spite of leaving me unanswered for a time.* Goneril's messenger delivered letters, which they read notwithstanding Lear's messenger was yet kneeling unanswered.

[7] *Meiny*, signifying a *family, household*, or *retinue of servants*, is certainly from the French *meinie*, or, as it was anciently written, *mesnie*; which word is regarded by Du Cange as equivalent with *mesonie*, or *maisonie*, from *maison*; in modern French, *menage*. It does not appear that the Saxons used *many* for a *family* or household.

The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceiv'd, had poison'd mine
(Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness),
Having more man than wit about me, drew[8];
He rais'd the house with loud and coward cries:
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.

Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild geese fly that way[9].

Fathers, that wear rags,
Do make their children blind;
But fathers, that bear bags,
Shall see their children kind.
Fortune, that arrant whore,
Ne'er turns the key to the poor.

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours[10] from thy daughters, as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother[11] swells up toward my heart!

[8] The personal pronoun, which is found in the preceding line, is understood before the word *having*, or before *drew*. The same licence is taken by Shakespeare in other places. See Cymbeline, Act iv. Sc. 3, note 1.

[9] *i. e.* "if this be their behaviour, the king's troubles are not yet at an end." This speech is omitted in the quartos.

[10] A quibble between *dolours* and *dollars*. The folio reads "*for* thy daughters."

[11] Lear affects to pass off the swelling of his heart, ready to burst with grief and indignation for the disease called the *mother*, or *hysterica passio*, which, in the poet's time, was not thought peculiar to women only. It is probable that Shakespeare had this suggested to him by a passage in Harsnet's Declaration of Popish Impostures, which he may have consulted in order to furnish out his character of Tom of Bedlam with demoniacal gibberish. "Ma. Maynie had a spice of the *hysterica passio*, as seems, from his youth; he himself termes it the *moother*." P. 25. It seems the priests persuaded him it was from the possession of the devil. "The disease I spake of was a spice of the *mother*,

Hysterica passio! down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element's below!—Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence than what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the king comes with so small a number[12]?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou'dst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant[13], to teach thee there's no labouring in the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes, but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty, but can smell him that's stinking[14]. Let go thy hold, when

wherewith I had been troubled before my going into Fraunce: whether I doe rightly term it the *mother* or no, I knowe not. A Scotish Doctor of Physick, then in Paris, called it, as I remember, *virtiginem capitis.* It riseth of a winde in the bottome of the belly, and proceeding with a great swelling, causeth a very painful collicke in the stomack, and an extraordinary giddines in the head," p. 263.

[12] The quartos have *train.*

[13] "Go to the ant, thou sluggard," says Solomon; "learn her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the *summer*, and gathereth her food in harvest." If, says the fool, you had been schooled by the ant, you would have known that the king's train, like that sagacious insect, prefer the summer of prosperity to the colder season of adversity, from which no profit can be derived; and desert him whose "mellow-hangings" have been all shaken down, and who by "one winter's brush" has been left "open and bare for every storm that blows."

[14] All men, but blind men, though they follow their noses, are led by their eyes; and this class of mankind, seeing the king ruined, have all deserted him: with respect to the blind, who have nothing but their noses to guide them, they also fly equally from a king whose fortunes are declining; for of the noses of blind men there is not one in twenty but can smell him who, be-

a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill[15], let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That, sir, which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack, when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry, the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool, that runs away;
The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learn'd you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, *with* GLOSTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?
They have travell'd hard to-night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying off!
Fetch me a better answer.

Glo. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremoveable and fix'd he is
In his own course.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!—
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the duke of Cornwall, and his wife.

Glo. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?

ing "muddy'd in fortune's mood, smells somewhat strong of her displeasure." You need not therefore be surprised at Lear's coming with so small a train.

[15] The folio has *upward*.

Glo. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service[16]:
Are they inform'd of this[17]? —— My breath and blood!—
Fiery? the fiery duke?—Tell the hot duke, that—
No, but not yet:—may be, he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office,
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I'll forbear;
And am fallen out with my more headier will,
To take the indispos'd and sickly fit
For the sound man. Death on my state! wherefore
[*Looking on* KENT.
Should he sit here? This act persuades me,
That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth:
Go, tell the duke and's wife, I'd speak with them,
Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,
Till it cry sleep to death[18].

Glo. I'd have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! — but, down.

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney[19] did to

[16] The folio reads, "commands, tends, service."

[17] This line is not in the quartos.

[18] The meaning of this passage seems to be, "I'll beat the drum till it causes the death of sleep; *i. e.* awakens them, causes them to sleep no more."

[19] In the Tournament of Tottenham, a *cokenay* signifies a *cook*. Bullokar, in his Expositor, 1616, under the word *Cockney*, says, "It is sometimes taken for a child that is tenderly or wantonly brought up; or for one that has been brought up in some great town, and knows nothing of the country fashion. It is used also

the eels, when she put them i' the paste alive; she rapp'd 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cry'd, *Down, wantons, down:* 'Twas her brother, that in pure kindness to his horse, butter'd his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOSTER, *and* Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace!

[KENT *is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou should'st not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepúlchring an adultress.—O, are you free?

[*To* KENT.

Some other time for that.—Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught: O Regan! she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture here,—

[*Points to his Heart.*

for a Londoner, or one born in or near the city; as we say, within the sound of Bow bell." The etymology, says Mr. Nares, seems most probable, which derives it from *cookery*. *Le pays de cocagne*, or *coquaine*, in old French, means a country of good cheer. *Cocagna*, in Italian, has the same meaning. Both might be derived from *coquina*. This famous country, if it could be found, is described as a region "where the hills were made of sugar-candy, and the loaves ran down the hills, crying *Come eat me*." Some lines in Camden's Remaines seem to make *cokeney* a name for London as well as its inhabitants. This *Lubberland*, as Florio calls it, seems to have been proverbial for the simplicity or gullibility of its inhabitants. A *cockney* and a *ninny-hammer*, or *simpleton*, were convertible terms. Thus Chaucer, in The Reve's Tale:—

"I shall be holden a *daffe* or a *cokeney*."

Decker, in his Newes from Hell, 1568, says, "'Tis not our fault; but our mother's, our *cockering* mothers, who for their labour made us to be called *cockneys*." The reader will find a curious article on the subject in Mr. Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare, vol. ii. p. 151.

I can scarce speak to thee; thou'lt not believe,
Of how deprav'd a quality——O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience; I have hope,
You less know how to value her desert,
Than she to scant her duty[20].

Lear. Say, how is that[21]?

Reg. I cannot think, my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: If, sir, perchance,
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine: you should be rul'd, and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself: Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return;
Say, you have wrong'd her, sir.

Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house[22]:
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;
Age is unnecessary[23]: on my knees I beg,

[20] It is clear that the *intended* meaning of this passage is as Steevens observes:—"You less know how to value her desert, than she (knows) to *scant* her duty, i. e. *to be wanting* in it."

[21] *Say*, &c. This line and the following speech is omitted in the quartos.

[22] i. e. *the order of families, duties of relation.* So Sir Thomas Smith, in his Commonwealth of England, 1601:—"The *house* I call here, the man, the woman, their children, their servants, bond and free." Capel thought it intended to express "*fathers*, who are not the heads only of a house or family, but its representatives; they are *the house*."

[23] *Age is unnecessary* appears to mean, *old people are useless.* So in The Old Law, by Massinger:—

"Your laws extend not to desert,
But to *unnecessary years*, and, my lord,
His are not such."

That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food."

Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly tricks:
Return you to my sister.

Lear. Never, Regan:
She hath abated me of half my train;
Look'd black upon me: struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart:—
All the stor'd vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

Corn. Fye, sir, fye!

Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall[24] and blast her pride!

Reg. O the blest gods! So will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse;
Thy tender-hearted[25] nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness; her eyes are fierce, but thine
Do comfort, and not burn: 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes[26],
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in: thou better know'st

[24] The folio has "To fall and *blister*." *Fall* seems here to be used as an active verb, signifying to humble or pull down. "Ye fen-suck'd fogs, drawn from the earth by the powerful action of the sun, infect her beauty, so as to fall and blast, *i. e.* humble and destroy her pride."

[25] The quarto has, "tender-*hested*;" the folio, "tender-*hefted*;" neither of which have any meaning, but are mere misprints for tender-*hearted*, an epithet occurring again in King Richard II. Act iii. Sc. 3.

[26] A *size* is a portion or allotment of food. The word and its origin are explained in Minsheu's Guide to Tongues, 1617. The term *sizer* is still used at Cambridge for one of the lowest rank of students, living on a stated allowance.

The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot[27],
Wherein I thee endow'd.

Reg. Good sir, to th'purpose.

[*Trumpets within.*

Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks?

Corn. What trumpet's that?

Enter Steward.

Reg. I know't, my sister's[28]; this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.—Is your lady come?

Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows:—
Out, varlet, from my sight!

Corn. What means your grace?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on't.—Who comes here? O heavens!

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow[29] obedience, if you yourselves are old[30],

[27] It is evident that *thou* here should be emphatic, and that it is an assertion not a question.

[28] Thus in Othello:—

"The Moor,—*I know his trumpet.*"

It should seem therefore that the approach of great personages was announced by some distinguishing note or tune appropriately used by their own trumpeters. Cornwall knows not the present sound; but to Regan, who had often heard her sister's trumpet, the first flourish of it was as familiar as was that of the Moor to the ears of Iago.

[29] To *allow* is to *approve*, in old phraseology. Thus in Psalm xi. ver. 6:—"The Lord *alloweth* the righteous."

[30] "Hoc oro, munus concede parenti,
Si tua maturis signentur tempora canis,
Et sis ipse parens." *Statius Theb.* x. 705.

Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!—
Art not asham'd to look upon this beard?—
[*To* GONERIL
O, Regan! wilt thou take her by the hand?

Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have I offended?

All's not offence, that indiscretion finds,
And dotage terms so.

Lear. O, sides, you are too tough!
Will you yet hold?—How came my man i' the stocks?

Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserv'd much less advancement[31].

Lear. You! did you?

Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so[32].
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,
Dismissing half your train, come then to me;
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return to her! and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—
Necessity's sharp pinch[33]!—Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot;—Return with her?

[31] By *less advancement* Cornwall means that Kent's *disorders* had entitled him to a post of even less honour than the stocks, a still worse or more disgraceful situation.

[32] The meaning is, *since you are weak, be content to think yourself weak.*

[33] The words, *Necessity's sharp pinch!* appear to be the reflection of Lear on the wretched sort of existence he had described in the preceding lines.

Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter[35]
To this detested groom. [*Looking on the* Steward.
Gon. At your choice, sir.
Lear. I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad;
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
We'll no more meet, no more see one another:—
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed[36] carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I'll not chide thee;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
Mend, when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I, and my hundred knights.
Reg. Not altogether so;
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome: Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion,
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.
Lear. Is this well spoken?

[35] *Sumpter* is generally united with *horse* or *mule*, to signify one that carries provisions or other necessaries; from *sumptus*, Lat. In the present instance *horse* seems to be understood, as it appears to be in the following passage from Beaumont and Fletcher's Two Noble Gentlemen:—

"I would have had you furnish d in such pomp
As never duke of Burgundy was furnish'd;
You should have had a *sumpter* though't had cost me
The laying out myself."

Perhaps *sumpter* originally meant the pannier or basket which the sumpter-horse carried. Thus in Cupid's Revenge:—

"And thy base issue shall carry *sumpters*."

We hear also of *sumpter-cloths*, *sumpter-saddles*, &c.

[36] *Embossed* here means *swelling, protuberant.*

Reg. I dare avouch it, sir: What, fifty followers?
Is it not well? What should you need of more?
Yea, or so many? sith that both charge and danger
Speak 'gainst so great a number? How, in one house,
Should many people, under two commands,
Hold amity? 'Tis hard; almost impossible.

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those that she calls servants, or from mine?

Reg. Why not, my lord? If then they chanc'd to slack you,
We could control them: If you will come to me
(For now I spy a danger), I entreat you
To bring but five and twenty; to no more
Will I give place or notice.

Lear. I gave you all—

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Made you my guardians, my depositaries;
But kept a reservation to be follow'd
With such a number: What, must I come to you
With five and twenty? Regan, said you so?

Reg. And speak't again, my lord; no more with me.

Lear. Those wicked creatures, yet do look well favour'd,
When others are more wicked; not being the worst,
Stands in some rank of praise[37]:—I'll go with thee;
[*To* GONERIL.
Thy fifty yet doth double five and twenty,
And thou art twice her love.

Gon. Hear me, my lord;
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command to tend you?

Reg. What need one?

Lear. O, reason not the need: our basest beggars

[37] i. e. *to be not the worst deserves some praise.*

Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap[38] as beast's: thou art a lady;
If only to go warm were gorgeous,
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
Which scarcely keeps thee warm.—But, for true need,—
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger!
O, let not women's weapons, water-drops,
Stain my man's cheeks!—No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
What they are, yet I know not[39]; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
No, I'll not weep:—
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws[40],

[38] *As cheap* here means *as little worth.* See Baret's Alvearie, 1573. C. 388.

[39] "Magnum est quodcunque paravi,
Quid sit, adhuc dubito." *Ovid. Met.* lib. vi.
"Haud quid sit scio,
Sed grande quiddam est." *Senecæ Thyestes.*
Let such as are unwilling to allow that copiers of nature must occasionally use the same thoughts and expressions, remember that of both these authors there were early translations. Golding thus renders the passage from Ovid:—
"The thing that I do purpose on is great, whate'er it is
I know not what it may be *yet.*"

[40] *Flaws* anciently signified *fragments*, as well as mere *cracks.* Among the Saxons it certainly had that meaning, as may be seen in Somner's Dict. Saxon, voce ƿloh. The word, as Bailey observes, was "especially applied to the breaking off *shivers* or thin pieces from precious stones."

Or ere I'll weep:—O, fool, I shall go mad!

[*Exeunt* LEAR, GLOSTER, KENT, *and* Fool.

Corn. Let us withdraw, 'twill be a storm.

[*Storm heard at a distance.*

Reg. This house is little; the old man and's people
Cannot be well bestow'd.

Gon. 'Tis his own blame; hath[41] put himself from rest,
And must needs taste his folly.

Reg. For his particular, I'll receive him gladly,
But not one follower.

Gon. So am I purpos'd.
Where is my lord of Gloster?

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Corn. Follow'd the old man forth:—he is return'd.

Glo. The king is in high rage.

Corn. Whither is he going?

Glo. He calls to horse; but will I know not whither.

Corn. 'Tis best to give him way; he leads himself.

Gon. My lord, entreat him by no means to stay.

Glo. Alack, the night comes on, and the bleak[42] winds
Do sorely ruffle[43]; for many miles about
There's scarce a bush.

Reg. O, sir, to wilful men,
The injuries, that they themselves procure,
Must be their schoolmasters: Shut up your doors;
He is attended with a desperate train;
And what they may incense[44] him to, being apt
To have his ear abus'd, wisdom bids fear.

[41] *Hath* is equivalent here to *he hath*.

[42] The folio substitutes *high* for *bleak*.

[43] Thus the folio. The quartos read, "Do sorely *ruſsle*," i. e. *rustle*. But *ruffle* is most probably the true reading. See the first note on Macbeth.

[44] To *incense* is here, as in other places, to *instigate*.

Corn. Shut up your doors, my lord: 'tis a wild night;
My Regan counsels well; come out o' the storm.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Heath. A Storm is heard, with Thunder and Lightning.*

Enter KENT, *and a* Gentleman, *meeting.*

Kent.

WHO'S here, beside foul weather?

Gent. One minded like the weather, most unquietly.

Kent. I know you: Where's the king?

Gent. Contending with the fretful elements:
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,
Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main[1],
That things might change, or cease[2]: [tears his white hair;
Which the impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage,
Catch in their fury, and make nothing of:

[1] The *main* seems to signify here the *main land*, the continent. This interpretation sets the two objects of Lear's desire in proper opposition to each other. He wishes for the destruction of the world, either by the winds blowing the land into the water, or raising the waters so as to overwhelm the land:—

"Terra mari miscebitur, et mare cœlo."
Lucret. iii. 854.

See also the Æneid, i. 133; xii. 204. So in Troilus and Cressida:—

"The *bounded waters*
Should lift their bosoms higher than the *shores*,
And make a sop of all this *solid globe*."

[2] The first folio ends this speech at "*change, or cease*," and begins again at Kent's speech, "*But who is with him?*"

Strives in his little world of man to out-scorn[3]
The to-and-fro-conflicting wind and rain.
This night, wherein the cub-drawn bear[4] would couch
The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
Keep their fur dry, unbonneted he runs,
And bids what will take all[5]].

Kent. But who is with him?

Gent. None but the fool; who labours to outjest
His heart-struck injuries.

Kent. Sir, I do know you;
And dare upon the warrant of my note[6],
Commend a dear thing to you. There is division,
Although as yet the face of it be cover'd
With mutual cunning, 'twixt Albany and Cornwall,
Who have (as who have not, that their great stars[7]
Thron'd and set high?) servants, who seem no less;
Which are to France the spies and speculators[8]

[3] Steevens thinks that we should read "out-*storm*." The error of printing *scorn* for *storm* occurs in the old copies of Troilus and Cressida, and might easily happen from the similarity of the words in old MSS.

[4] That is, *a bear whose dugs are drawn dry by its young.* Shakespeare has the same image in As You Like It:—

"A lioness, with *udders all drawn dry*,
Lay couching."

Again ibidem:—

"Food to the *suck'd and hungry* lioness."

[5] So in Antony and Cleopatra, Enobarbus says:—

"I'll strike, and cry, *Take all.*"

[6] The quartos read *art.*

[7] This and seven following lines are not in the quartos. The lines in crotchets lower down, from "But, true it is," &c. to the end of the speech, are not in the folio. So that if the speech be read with omission of the former, it will stand according to the first edition; and if the former lines are read, and the latter omitted, it will then stand according to the second. The second edition is generally best, and was probably nearest to Shakespeare's last copy: but in this speech the first is preferable; for in the folio the messenger is sent, he knows not why, he knows not whither.

[8] The old copy has, erroneously, *speculations.* The speculators are the *observers.*

Intelligent of our state; what hath been seen
Either in snuffs and packings[9] of the dukes;
Or the hard rein which both of them have borne
Against the old kind king; or something deeper,
Whereof, perchance, these are but furnishings[10]:—
[But, true it is, from France there comes a power
Into this scatter'd kingdom; who already
Wise in our negligence, have secret feet[11]
In some of our best ports, and are at point
To show their open banner.—Now to you:
If on my credit you dare build so far
To make your speed to Dover, you shall find
Some that will thank you, making just report
Of how unnatural and bemadding sorrow
The king hath cause to plain.
I am a gentleman of blood and breeding;
And, from some knowledge and assurance, offer
This office to you.]

Gent. I will talk farther with you.

Kent. No, do not.
For confirmation that I am much more
Than my out-wall, open this purse, and take
What it contains: If you shall see Cordelia
(As fear not but you shall), show her this ring;
And she will tell you who your fellow[12] is
That yet you do not know. Fye on this storm!
I will go seek the king.

Gent. Give me your hand: Have you no more to say

Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the king (in which your pain

[9] *Snuffs* are *dislikes*, and *packings*, *underhand contrivances*.

[10] A *furnish* anciently signified a *sample*. "To lend the world a *furnish* of wit, she lays her own out to pawn."—*Green's Groats-worth of Wit.*

[11] i. e. *secret footing*.

[12] i. e. *companion*. The folio has, "*that* fellow."

That way, I'll this,) he that first lights on him,
Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

Scene II. *Another Part of the Heath. Storm continues.*

Enter Lear *and* Fool.

Lear. Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks[1]! rage! blow!
You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing[2] fires,
Vaunt-couriers[3] to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once[4],
That make ingrateful man!

Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water[5] in a dry house

[1] The poet was here thinking of the common representation of the winds in many books of his time. We find the same allusion in Troilus and Cressida. See vol. vii. p. 250.

[2] *Thought-executing,* i. e. *doing execution with celerity equal to thought.*

[3] *Avant-couriers,* Fr. The phrase occurs in other writers of Shakespeare's time. It originally meant the foremost scouts of an army. In The Tempest, "Jove's lightnings" are termed more familiarly—

"The *precursors*
O' the dreadful thunder-claps."

[4] There is a parallel passage in The Winter's Tale:—

"Let nature crush the sides o' the earth together,
And mar the *seeds* within."

So again in Macbeth:—

"And the sum
Of nature's *germens* tumble all together."

For the force of the word *spill,* see Genesis, xxxviii. 9.

[5] *Court holy-water,* i. e. *fair words and flattering speeches.* "*Con-fiare alcuno,*" says Florio, "to soothe or flatter one, to set one agogge, or with fair words bring him into a foole's paradise;"

is better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughter's blessing! Here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools.

Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit fire! spout rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters;
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness,
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription[6]; then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That will with two pernicious daughters join[a]
Your high engender'd battles, 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

Fool. He that has a house to put his head in, has a good head-piece.

The cod-piece that will house,
Before the head has any,
The head and he shall louse;—
So beggars marry many.
The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make,
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

—for there was never yet fair woman, but she made mouths in a glass.

Enter KENT.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience,
I will say nothing.

Kent. Who's there?

fill one with hopes, or *court holie-water.*" It appears to have been borrowed from the French, who have their *Eau bénite de la cour* in the same sense.

[6] i. e. *submission, obedience.* See Act i. Sc. 2, note 6; and vol. vii. p. 254, note 17.

[a] The quartos read, *have* and *join'd.*

Fool. Marry, here's grace, and a cod-piece[7]; that's a wise man, and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night,
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow[8] the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: Since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
The affliction, nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pudder[9] o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: Hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular[10] of virtue
That art incestuous: Caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life!—Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents[11], and cry
These dreadful summoners grace[12]. I am a man,

[7] Meaning the king and himself. The king's *grace* was the usual expression in Shakespeare's time.

[8] To *gallow* is to *frighten*, to *scare*; from the A. S. aȝælan, or aȝælþan. In the corrupted form of to *gally* it is still in use provincially.

[9] The folio has *pudder*; one of the quartos *powther*; the other quarto reads *thund'ring*.

[10] The quarto has, thou simular *man* of virtue: *simular*, i. e. *counterfeit*; from *simulo*, Lat.

> " My practices so prevail'd,
> That I return'd with *simular* proof enough
> To make the noble Leonatus mad."
>
> *Cymbeline*, Act v. Sc. 5.

The folio omits *man*.

[11] *Continent* for that which *contains* or *encloses*. Thus in Antony and Cleopatra:—

" Heart, once be stronger than thy *continent*."

The quartos read, *concealed centers*.

[12] *Summoners* are officers that summon offenders before a proper tribunal. See Chaucer's Sompnour's Tale. v. 625-670. Thus

More sinn'd against, than sinning[13].

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest;
Repose you there: while I to this hard house,
(More hard than is the stone[14] whereof 'tis rais'd;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in), return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.

Lear. My wits begin to turn,—
Come on, my boy: How dost, my boy? Art cold?
I am cold myself.—Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel,
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee[15].

Fool. He that has and a little tiny wit,—
With heigh, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit;
Though the rain it raineth every day[16].

Lear. True, my good boy.—Come, bring us to this hovel. [*Exeunt* LEAR *and* KENT.

Fool. This is a brave night to cool a courtezan[17].
—I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;

in *Howard's Defensative against the Poison of supposed Prophecies*, 1581:—"They seem to brag most of the strange events which follow for the most part after blazing starres, as if they were the *summoners* of God to call princes to the seat of judgment."

[13] Œdipus, in Sophocles, represents himself in the same light. Œdip. Colon. v. 270:—

Τά γ' ἔργα μου
Πεπονθότ' ἐστὶ μᾶλλον ἢ δεδρακότα.

[14] The folio reads, "More harder than the stones."

[15] The quartos read, "That *sorrowes* yet for thee."

[16] This is an adaptation of the concluding song in Twelfth Night. The quartos omit *and* in the first line, and have *for* instead of *though* in the fourth.

[17] This speech is not in the quartos.

When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No hereticks burn'd, but wenches' suitors:
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
When usurers tell their gold i' the field;
And bawds and whores do churches build:—
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion[19].
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be us'd with feet.
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time. [*Exit.*

Scene III. *A Room in* Gloster's *Castle.*

Enter Gloster *and* Edmund.

Glo. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing: When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage, and unnatural!

[19] This was suggested by what is commonly called Chaucer's Prophecy. It is thus quoted by Puttenham, in his Arte of English Poesie, 1589:—

> "When faith fails in priestes saws,
> And lords hests are holden for laws,
> And robbery is tane for purchase,
> And letchery for solace,
> Then shall the realm of Albion
> Be brought to great confusion."

See the Works of Chaucer in Whittingham's edit. vol. v. p. 179.

Glo. Go to; say you nothing: There is division between the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have received a letter this night;—'tis dangerous to be spoken:—I have locked the letter in my closet. these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home; there is part of a power already footed[1]: we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you, and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived: If he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund: pray you, be careful. [*Exit*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too:—
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses; no less than all:
The younger rises, when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *A Part of the Heath, with a Hovel.*

Enter Lear, Kent, *and* Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?

Kent. I'd rather break mine own: Good my lord, enter.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much, that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;

[1] The quartos read, *landed.*

But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt[1]. Thou'dst shun a bear:
But if thy flight lay toward the raging[2] sea,
Thou'dst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind's free,
The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else,
Save what beats there—Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand,
For lifting food to't?—But I will punish home:—
No, I will weep no more.—In such a night
To shut me out!—Pour on; I will endure[3]:—
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that,—

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. 'Pr'ythee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease,
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more.—But I'll go in:
In, boy; go, first.—[*To the* Fool.] You houseless[4] poverty,—
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.—
[Fool *goes in.*
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,

[1] That of two concomitant pains, the greater obscures or relieves the less, is an aphorism of Hippocrates. See Disquisitions Metaphysical and Literary, by F. Sayers, M.D. 1793, p. 68.

"He lesser pangs can bear who hath endur'd the chief."
Faerie Queene, b. i. c. 6.

[2] The folio, "roaring."

[3] This line is omitted in the quartos.

[4] This and the next line are only in the folio. They are very judiciously intended to represent that humility, or tenderness, or neglect of forms which affliction forces on the mind.

Your loop'd and window'd raggedness[5], defend you
From seasons such as these? O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physick, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel;
That thou may'st shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.

Edg. [*Within.*] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom[7]!

[*The* Fool *runs out from the Hovel.*

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit. Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand.—Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit; he says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw?

Come forth.

Enter EDGAR, *disguised as a Madman.*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me:—
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.—
Humph! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee[8].

Lear. Didst thou give[9] all to thy two daughters?
And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame,

[5] *Loop'd* and *window'd* is full of *holes* and *apertures:* the allusion is to loop-holes, such as are found in ancient castles, and designed for the admission of light, where windows would have been incommodious. The folio has *lopp'd.*

[7] This speech of Edgar's is omitted in the quartos. He gives the sign used by those who are sounding the depth at sea.

[8] So in the Induction to The Taming of the Shrew, Sly says, "Go to thy cold bed and warm thee;" which is supposed to be in ridicule of The Spanish Tragedy, or some play equally absurd. The word *cold* is omitted in the folio in this and the preceding line.

[9] The quartos, "*Hast* thou *given.*"

through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire[10], that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor:—Bless thy five wits[11]! Tom's a-cold.—O, do de, do de, do de.—Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking[12]! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: There could I have him now,—and there,—and there again, and there. [*Storm continues.*

Lear. What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?—
Could'st thou save nothing? Did'st thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all ashamed.

[10] Alluding to the *ignis fatuus*, supposed to be lights kindled by mischievous beings to lead travellers into destruction. He afterwards recounts the temptations by which he was prompted to suicide; the opportunities of destroying himself, which often occurred to him in his melancholy moods. Infernal spirits are always represented as urging the wretched to self-destruction. So in Dr. Faustus, 1604:—

"Swords, poisons, halters, and envenom'd steel,
Are laid before me to despatch myself."

Shakespeare found this charge against the fiend in Harsnet's Declaration, 1603, before cited.

[11] It has been before observed that the *wits* seem to have been reckoned *five* by analogy to the five senses. They were sometimes confounded by old writers, as in the instances cited by Percy and Steevens; Shakespeare, however, in his 141st Sonnet, considers them as distinct:—

"But my *five wits* nor my *five senses* can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee."

See Much Ado About Nothing, Act i. Sc. 1, note 9.

[12] To *take* is to *blast*, or *strike with malignant influence*. See Merry Wives of Windsor, Act iv. Sc. 4, note 2. See also a former passage:—

"Strike her young bones,
Ye *taking* airs, with lameness."

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults[13], light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdu'd nature
To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.—
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot
Those pelican daughters[14].

Edg. Pillicock[15] sat on pillicock's-hill;—
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend: Obey thy parents; keep thy word justly;[16] swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweetheart on proud array: Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been?

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curl'd my hair[17]; wore gloves in my cap[18];

[13] So in Timon of Athens:—
"Be as a planetary *plague*, when Jove
Will o'er some high-view'd city *hang his poison*
In the sick air."

[14] The young pelican is fabled to suck the mother's blood. The allusions to this fable are very numerous in old writers.

[15] See Act ii. Sc. 3, note 6, p. 381, ante. It should be observed that *Killico* is one of the devils mentioned in Harsnet's book. The inquisitive reader may find a further explanation of this word in a note to the translation of Rabelais, edit. 1750, vol. i. p. 184. In Minsheu's Dictionary, art. 9299; and Chalmers's Works of Sir David Lindsay, Glossary, v. *pillok*. See note on Turlygod, Act ii. Sc. 3, p. 409.

[16] The folio, "Keep thy word's justice."

[17] "Then Ma. Mainy, by the instigation of the first of the seven [spirits], began to set his hands unto his side, *curled his hair*, and used such gestures as Ma. Edmunds [the exorcist] presently affirmed that that spirit was *Pride*. Herewith he began to curse and banne, saying, What a poxe do I here? I will stay

served the lust of my mistress's heart, and did the act of darkness with her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one, that slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it: Wine loved I deeply; dice dearly; and in woman, out-paramour'd the Turk: False of heart, light of ear[19], bloody of hand; Hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to women: Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets[20], thy pen from lenders' books[21], and defy the foul fiend.

no longer among a company of rascal priests, but go to the court, and brave it amongst my fellows, the noblemen there assembled." ——"Shortly after they [the seven spirits] were all cast forth, and in such manner as Ma. Edmunds directed them, which was, that every devil should depart in some certaine forme, representing either a beast or some other creature that had the resemblance of that sinne whereof he was the chief author: whereupon the spirit of *Pride* departed in the forme of a *peacock;* the spirit of *Sloth* in the likeness of an *asse;* the spirit of *Envie* in the similitude of a *dog;* the spirit of *Gluttony* in the form of a *wolfe;* and the other devils had also in their departure their particular likenesses agreeable to their natures."—*Harsnet's Declaration,* &c. 1603. Before each sin was cast out Mainy, by gestures, acted that particular sin; curling his hair, to show pride, &c. &c.

[18] It was anciently the custom to wear *gloves* in the hat on three distinct occasions, viz. as the favour of a mistress, the memorial of a friend, and as a mark to be challenged by an enemy. Prince Henry boasts that he *will pluck a glove from the com monest creature and wear it in his helmet.* And Tucca says to Sir Quintilian, in Decker's Satiromastix:—"Thou shalt wear her *glove* in thy worshipful *hat,* like to a leather brooch." And Pandora, in Lyly's Woman in the Moon, 1597:—

"He that first presents me with his head
Shall wear my *glove* in favour of the dead."

Portia, in her assumed character, asks Bassanio for his *gloves,* which she says she will wear for his sake: and King Henry V. gives the pretended *glove* of Alençon to Fluellen, which afterwards occasions his quarrel with the English soldier.

[19] i. e. *credulous of evil, ready to receive malicious reports.*

[20] *Plackets* are *stomachers.* See vol. iv. p. 97, note 60.

[21] When spendthrifts, &c. resorted to usurers or tradesmen for

—Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: Says suum, mun, ha no nonny, dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa; let him trot by[22]. [*Storm still continues.*

Lear. Why, thou were better in thy grave, than to answer with thy uncover'd body this extremity of the skies.—Is man no more than this? Consider him well: Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume:—Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated!—Thou art the thing itself:—unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art.—Off, off, you lendings:—Come; unbutton here[23].

[*Tearing off his Clothes.*

the purpose of raising money by means of shop goods, or *brown paper* commodities, they usually entered their promissory notes, or other similar obligations, in books kept for that purpose. In Lodge's Looking Glasse for England, 1598, 4to. a usurer says to a gentleman, "I have thy hand set to my book, that thou receiv'd'st forty pounds of me in monie." To which the other answers, "It was your device to colour the statute, but your conscience knows what I had."

"If I but *write my name in mercer's books,*
I am as sure to have at six months end
A rascal at my elbow with his mace," &c.
All Fools, by Chapman, 1605.

[22] "Dolphin my boy, my boy,
Cease, let him trot by;
It seemeth not that such a foe
From me or you would fly."

This is a stanza from a very old ballad, written on some battle fought in France; during which the king, unwilling to put the suspected valour of his son the *Dauphin* to the trial, therefore, as different champions cross the field, the king always discovers some objection to his attacking each of them, and repeats the two first lines as every fresh personage is introduced; and at last assists in propping up a dead body against a tree for him to try his manhood upon. Steevens had this account from an old gentleman, who was only able to report part of the ballad. In Jonson's Bartholomew Fair, Cokes cries out, "God's my life! He shall be Dauphin, my boy!" *Hey nonny nonny* is merely the burthen of another old ballad.

[23] The words *unbutton here* are only in the folio. The quartos read, *Come on, be true.*

Fool. 'Pr'ythee, nuncle, be contented; this is a naughty[24] night to swim in.—Now a little fire in a wild field were like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all the rest on's body cold. — Look, here comes a walking fire.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet[25]: he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin[26], squints the eye, and makes

[24] *Naughty* signifies *bad, unfit, improper.* This epithet, which, as it stands here, excites a smile, in the age of Shakespeare was employed on serious occasions. The merriment of the Fool depended on his general image, and not on the quaintness of its auxiliary.

[25] The name of this fiend, though so grotesque, was not invented by Shakespeare, but by those who wished to impose upon their hearers the belief of his actual existence: this and most of the fiends mentioned by Edgar being to be found in Bishop Harsnet's book, among those which the Jesuits, about the time of the Spanish invasion, pretended to cast out, for the purpose of making converts. The principal scene of this farce was laid in the family of Mr. Edmund Peckham, a Catholic. Harsnet published his account of the detection of the imposture, by order of the privy council. "*Frateretto, Fliberdigibet, Hoberdidance, Tocobatto,* were four devils of the round or morrice. . . . . These four had forty assistants under them, as themselves doe confesse. Flebergibbe is used by Latimer for a sycophant. And Cotgrave explains Coquette by a *Flebergibet* or Titifill."

It was an old tradition that spirits were relieved from the confinement in which they were held during the day, at the time of curfew, that is, at the close of the day, and were permitted to wander at large till the first cock-crowing. Hence, in The Tempest, they are said to "rejoice to hear the solemn curfew." See Tempest, Act i. Sc. 2, note 38; and Hamlet, Act i. Sc. 1, and Sc. 5.

[26] The *pin* and *web* is *a disease of the eyes resembling the cataract in an imperfect stage.* Acerbi, in his Travels, vol. ii. p. 20, has given the Lapland method of cure. In a fragment of an old medical treatise, it is thus described:—"Another sykenes ther byth of yezen, on a *webbe*, a nother a *wem*, that hydyth the myddel of the yezen; & this hes to maners, other whilys he is white & thynne, and other whilys he is thykke, as whenne the obtalmye ne is noght clene yhelyd up, bote the rote abydyth stylle. Other whylys the webbe ys noght white but rede, other blake."

the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

Saint Withold footed thrice the wold[27];
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee[28]!

Kent. How fares your grace?

Enter GLOSTER, *with a Torch.*

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glo. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt, and the water[29]; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat, and the

[27] About *St. Withold* we have no certainty. This adventure is not found in the common legends of *St. Vitalis*, whom Mr. Tyrwhitt thought was meant. The *wold* is a plain and open country; pol̆d, Saxon: a country without wood, whether hilly or not. It appears to have been pronounced *old*, or *ould*, and is sometimes so written. Bullokar calls it *a sheep-walk*. We have Stow-on-the-*Wold* in Gloucestershire. The *wold* also designates a large tract of country on the borders of Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire; and Cots*wold* in Gloucestershire. Antiquaries are divided in opinion whether *weald* is of the same family, as it is said to mean a *woody* country. "Her nine-*fold*" seems to be put for the sake of the rhyme, instead of nine *foals*. For what purpose the incubus is enjoined to *plight her troth* will appear from a charm against the *night-mare* in Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft, which occurs, with slight variation, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Monsieur Thomas:—

"S. George, S. George, our ladies knight,
He walk'd by daie, so did he by night,
Until such time as he hir found:
He hir beat, and he hir bound,
Until hir she to him plight,
She would not come to [him] that night."

[28] See Macbeth.

[29] i. e. *and the water-newt.*

ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipp'd from tything to tything, and stock'd, punish'd[30], and imprison'd; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, Horse to ride, and weapon to wear,—

But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year[31].

Beware my follower: Peace, Smulkin[32]; peace, thou fiend!

Glo. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman; Modo he's call'd, and Mahu[33].

Glo. Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile, That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glo. Go in with me; my duty cannot suffer To obey in all your daughter's hard commands: Though their injunction be to bar my doors,

[30] The quartos read, "stock-punished."

[31] In the metrical Romance of Sir Bevis, who was confined seven years in a dungeon, it is said that—

"Rattes and mice, and such smal dere,
Was his meat that seven yere."

[32] "The names of other punie spirits cast out of Twyford were these:—Hilco, *Smolkin*, Hillio," &c.—*Harsnet's Detection*, &c. p. 49. Again, "*Maho* was the chief devil that had possession of Sarah Williams; but another of the possessed, named Richard Mainy, was molested by a still more considerable fiend, called *Modu*," p. 268; where the said Richard Mainy deposes:—"Furthermore it is pretended, that there remaineth still in mee the prince of devils, whose name should be *Modu*." And, p. 269:—"When the said priests had despatched their business at Hackney (where they had been exorcising Sarah Williams), they then returned towards mee, upon pretence to cast the great prince *Modu* out of mee."

[33] In the Goblins, by Sir John Suckling, a catch is introduced, which concludes with these two lines:—

"The prince of darkness is a gentleman;
Mahu, Mahu is his name."

This catch may not be the production of Suckling, but the original referred to by Edgar's speech.

And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventur'd to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher:—
What is the cause of thunder?

Kent. Good my lord, take his offer;
Go into the house.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban:
What is your study?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.

Kent. Impórtune him once more to go, my lord,
His wits begin t'unsettle[34].

Glo. Canst thou blame him?
His daughters seek his death:—Ah, that good Kent!
He said it would be thus:—Poor banish'd man!—
Thou say'st, the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself; I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late; I lov'd him, friend,—
No father his son dearer: true to tell thee,
[*Storm continues.*
The grief hath craz'd my wits. What a night's this!
I do beseech your grace,—

[34] Lord Orford has the following remark in the postscript to his Mysterious Mother, which deserves a place here:—"When Belvidera talks of *lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of Amber*, she is not mad, but light-headed. When madness has taken possession of a person, such character ceases to be fit for the stage, or at least should appear there but for a short time; it being the business of the theatre to exhibit passions, not distempers. The finest picture ever drawn of a head discomposed by misfortune is that of King Lear. His thoughts dwell on the ingratitude of his daughters, and every sentence that falls from his wildness excites reflection and pity. Had frenzy entirely seized him, our compassion would abate; we should conclude that he no longer felt unhappiness. Shakespeare wrote as a philosopher, Otway as a poet."

Lear. O, cry you mercy,
Noble philosopher, your company.

Edg. Tom's a-cold.

Glo. In, fellow, there, in to th' hovel; keep thee warm.

Lear. Come, let's in all.

Kent. This way, my lord.

Lear. With him;
I will keep still with my philosopher.

Kent. Good my lord, sooth him; let him take the fellow.

Glo. Take him you on.

Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.

Lear. Come, good Athenian.

Glo. No words, no words: Hush.

Edg. Child Rowland[35] *to the dark tower came,*
His word was still,—Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man.

[*Exeunt.*

[35] Capel observes that *Child Rowland* means the *Knight Orlando.* He would read *come,* with the quartos absolutely (*Orlando being come to the dark tower*); and supposes a line to be lost "which spoke of some giant, the inhabitant of that tower, and the smeller-out of *Child Rowland,* who comes to encounter him." He proposes to fill up the passage thus:—

"Child Rowland to the dark tower *come,*
[*The giant roar'd, and out he ran*];
His word was still," &c.

Part of this is to be found in the second part of Jack and the Giants, which, if not as old as the time of Shakespeare, may have been compiled from something that was so: they are uttered by a giant:—

"*Fee, faw, fum,*
I smell the blood of an Englishman;
Be he alive, or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to make my bread."

Another version is given by Jamieson in Illustrations of Northern Antiquities, 1814, p. 402.

SCENE V. *A Room in* Gloster's *Castle.*

Enter CORNWALL *and* EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge, ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit[1], set a-work by a reproveable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess.

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloster. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside.*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood.

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Cornwall seems to mean the merit of Edmund; which, being noticed by Gloster, provoked or instigated Edgar to seek his father's death.

Scene VI. *A Chamber in a Farm-House, adjoining the Castle.*

Enter Gloster *and* Kent.

Glo. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully: I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits has given way to his impatience:—The gods reward your kindness!

[*Exit* Gloster.

Enter Lear, Edgar, *and* Fool.

Edg. Frateretto[1] calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent[2], and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. 'Pr'ythee, nuncle, tell me, whether a mad man be a gentleman, or a yeoman?

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No; he's a yeoman, that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman, that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits Come hissing[3] in upon 'em:—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back[4].

[1] See the quotation from Harsnet, in note 25 on the preceding scene. Rabelais says that Nero was a fiddler in hell, and Trajan an angler. The history of Garagantua had appeared in English before 1575, being mentioned in Laneham's Letter from Killingworth, printed in that year.

[2] Perhaps he is here addressing the *Fool.* Fools were anciently termed *innocents.* So in All's Well that Ends Well, Act iv. Sc. 3:—"The sheriff's fool—a dumb *innocent*, that could not say him nay."

[3] The old copies have *hizzing*, which Malone changed to *whizzing.* One of the quartos spells the word *hiszing*, which indicates that the reading of the present text is right.

[4] This and the next thirteen speeches are only in the quartos.

Fool. He's mad, that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's heels[5], a boy's love, or a whore's oath.

Lear. It shall be done, I will arraign them straight :—
Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer[6] :——
[*To* EDGAR.
Thou, sapient sir, sit here. [*To the* Fool]—Now, you she foxes !—

Edg. Look, where she stands and glares !—
Wantonest thou eyes at trial, madam[7] ?
Come o'er the bourn[8], *Bessy, to me :—*

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

[5] The old copies read, " a horse's *health* ;" but *heels* was certainly meant. " *Trust not a horse's heels, nor a dog's tooth,*" is a proverb in Ray's Collection ; which may be traced at least as far back as the time of our Edward II. " Et ideo Babio in comœdiis insinuat dicens ; — In fide, dente, *pede,* mulieris, *equi* canis est fraus.—Hoc sic vulgariter est dici :—

" Till *horsis fote* thou never traist,
Till hondis toth, ne woman's faith."

Forduni Scotichronicon, l. xiv. c. 32.

The proverb in the text is probably from the Italian.

[6] *Justicer,* from *Justiciarius,* was the old term, as we learn from Lambard's Eirenarcha :—" And of this it commeth that M. Fitzherbert (in his Treatise of the Justices of Peace), calleth them *justicers* (contractly for *justiciars*), and not *justices,* as we commonly and not altogether improperly doe name them." The old copy has *justice.* But false *justicer* occurs afterwards.

[7] In the old copy we have, " Look where *he* stands and glares, *wantest* thou eyes," &c. Theobald altered *he* to *she ;* and *wantonest* for *wantest* is the happy suggestion of Mr. Seward.

[8] A *bourn* is a *brook* or *rivulet.* At the beginning of A Very Mery and Pythie Comedie, called The Longer Thou Livest The More Fool Thou Art, &c. blk. let. no date :—" Entreth Moros, counterfaiting a vain gesture and foolish countenance, synging the foote of many songs, as fooles were wont ;" and among them is this passage :—

" Com over the *boorne* Bessé,
My litle pretie Bessé,
Come over the *boorne,* Bessé to me."

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. *Hopdance* cries in Tom's belly[9] for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amaz'd: Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first:—Bring in the evidence—
Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;
[*To* EDGAR.
And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity, [*To the* Fool.
Bench by his side:—You are o'the commission,
Sit you too. [*To* KENT.

Edg. Let us deal justly.
Sleepest, or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;
And for one blast of thy minikin[10] mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.
Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take

It occurs with some variation in W. Birch's Dialogue between Elizabeth and England. There is peculiar propriety in this address: Bessy and poor Tom usually travelled together, as appears by a passage cited from Dick Whipper's Sessions, 1607, by Malone.—Mad women, who travel about the country, are called in Shropshire *Cousin Betties*, and elsewhere *Mad Bessies*.

[9] Much of this may have been suggested by Harsnet's book. Sarah Williams deposeth, "That if at any time she did belch, as often times she did by reason that shee was troubled with a wind in her stomacke, the priests would say at such times, that then the spirit began to rise in her . . . and that the wind was the devil." "And," as she saith, "if they heard any *croaking in her belly* . . . then they would make a wonderful matter of that."—*Hoberdidance* is mentioned in a former note. "One time shee remembereth that, shee having the said *croaking in her belly*, they said it was the *devil* that was about the bed, that spake *with the voice of a toad*," p. 194, 195, &c.

[10] *Minikin* was anciently a term of endearment. Baret, in his Alvearie, interprets *feat* by "proper, well fashioned, *minikin*, handsome."

my oath before this honourable assembly, she kick'd the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress; Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool[11].

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on.—Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire!—Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity!—Sir, where is the patience now,
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting. [*Aside.*

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them:—Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound, or spaniel, brach, or lym[12];
Or bobtail tike[13], or trundle-tail;

[11] This proverbial expression occurs likewise in Lyly's Mother Bombie, 1594.

[12] I suspect that *brach* signified a *harrier*. See vol. iii. p. 120, note 7. A *lym* or *lyme* was a *blood-hound* (see Minsheu's Dict. in voce); sometimes also called a *limmer* or *leamer*; from the *leam* or *leash*, in which he was held till he was let slip. In the book of Ancient Tenures, by T. B. 1679, the words "canes domini regis *lesos*," are translated *leash hounds*, such as draw after hurt deer in a *leash* or *lyam*. So Drayton, in The Muses Elysium:—

"My doghook at my belt, to which my *lyam's* ty'd."

[13] *Tijk* is the Northern word for a little worthless dog. *Trindle-tails* are mentioned in The Booke of Huntyng, &c. blk. let. no date; and in the old comedy of A Woman kill'd with Kindness.

Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.
Do de, de de. Sessa[14]. Come, march to wakes and fairs, and market towns:—Poor Tom, thy horn is dry[15].

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan, see what breeds about her heart: Is there any cause in nature, that makes these hard hearts?—You, sir, I entertain you for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your garments: you will say, they are Persian attire[16]! but let them be changed. [*To* EDGAR.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here, and rest awhile[17].

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: So, so, so: We'll go to supper i' the morning: So, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOSTER.

Glo. Come hither, friend: Where is the king my master?

[14] *Sessa*; this word occurs before in the fourth Scene of this Act, p. 411. It is spelled *Sessey* in both places in the old copy. The same word occurs in the Induction to The Taming of the Shrew, where it is spelled *sessa*: it appears to have been a corruption of *cessez*, *stop* or *hold*, be quiet, have done.

[15] A *horn* was usually carried about by every Tom of Bedlam, to receive such drink as the charitable might afford him, with whatever scraps of food they might give him. When, therefore, Edgar says *his horn is dry*, or *empty*, he merely means, in the language of the character he assumes, to supplicate that it may be filled with drink. See A Pleasant Dispute between a Coach and a Sedan, 4to. 1636:—"I have observed when a coach is appendant but two or three hundred pounds a yeere, marke it, the dogges are as leane as rakes; you may tell all their ribbes lying be the fire; and *Tom a Bedlam* may sooner eate *his horne* than get it *filled with small drinke*, and for his old almes of bacon there is no hope in the world."

[16] *Attire* is wanting in the folio.

[17] i. e. *on the cushions to which he points.*

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glo. Good friend, I pr'ythee take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him:
There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:
If thou should'st dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss: Take up, take up[18];
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

[*Kent.* Oppressed nature sleeps[19]:—
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken senses[a],
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure.—Come, help to bear thy master;
Thou must not stay behind. [*To the* Fool.

Glo. Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt* KENT, GLOSTER, *and the* Fool, *bearing off the King.*

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers, suffers most i' the mind;
Leaving free things, and happy shows, behind:
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,

[18] One of the quartos reads, "Take up *the king*;" the other, "Take up *to keep*," &c.

[19] "These two concluding speeches, by Kent and Edgar, are restored from the quarto. The soliloquy of Edgar is extremely fine; and the sentiments of it are drawn equally from nature and the subject. Besides, with regard to the stage, it is absolutely necessary: for as Edgar is not designed, in the constitution of the play, to attend the king to Dover, how absurd would it look for a character of his importance to quit the scene without one word said, or the least intimation what we are to expect from him."—*Theobald.*

[a] The old copies have *sinewes* by error for *senses*.

When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that, which makes me bend, makes the king bow;
He childed, as I father'd!—Tom, away:
Mark the high noises[20] and thyself bewray[21],
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee,
In thy just proof, repeals, and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king!
Lurk, lurk.] [*Exit.*

Scene VII. *A Room in* Gloster's *Castle.*

Enter Cornwall, Regan, Goneril, Edmund, *and* Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter;—the army of France is landed:—Seek out the traitor[a] Gloster.

[*Exeunt some of the* Servants.

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure.—Edmund, keep you our sister company; the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father, are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation; we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift, and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister;—farewell, my lord of Gloster[1].

[20] *i. e.* "the great events that are approaching, the loud tumult of approaching war."

[21] i. e. *betray, discover.*

[a] The quartos have *villain.*

[1] Meaning Edmund invested with his father's titles. The

Enter Steward.

How now? Where's the king?

Stew. My lord of Gloster hath convey'd him hence:
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists[2] after him, met him at gate;
Who with some other of the lord's dependants,
Are gone with him toward Dover; where they boast
To have well armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

[*Exeunt* GONERIL *and* EDMUND.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.—Go seek the traitor Gloster,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[*Exeunt other* Servants.

Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice; yet our power
Shall do a courtesy[3] to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who's there? The traitor?

Re-enter Servants, *with* GLOSTER.

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.

Corn. Bind fast his corky[4] arms.

Steward, speaking immediately after, mentions the old earl by the same title.

[2] A *questrist* is *one who goes in quest* or *search of another.*

[3] *Do a courtesy to our wrath,* simply means *bend to our wrath, as a courtesy is made by bending the body.* To *pass on any one* may be traced from Magna Charta:—"Neque *super eum ibimus,* nisi per legale judicuum parium suorum." It is common to most of our early writers:—"A jury of devils impanneled and deeply sworne *to pass on* all villains in hell."—*If this be not a Good Play the Devil is in it,* 1612.

[4] i. e. *dry, wither'd, husky arms.* This epithet was perhaps borrowed from Harsnet:—"It would pose all the cunning exorcists that are this day to be found, to teach an old *corkie* woman

Glo. What mean your graces?——Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.
Corn. Bind him, I say. [Servants *bind him.*
Reg. Hard, hard:—O filthy traitor.
Glo. Unmerciful lady as you are, I'm none[a].
Corn. To this chair bind him:—Villain, thou shalt find— [REGAN *plucks his Beard.*
Glo. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done,
To pluck me by the beard.
Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glo. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken[5], and accuse thee: I am your host;
With robbers' hands, my hospitable favours[6]
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple answer'd, for we know the truth.
Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatick king?
Speak.
Glo. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one oppos'd.
Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?

to writhe, tumble, curvet, and fetch her morice gambols as Martha Bressier did."

[a] The quartos read, "I am *true*."

[5] i. e. *quicken into life.*

[6] *Favours* mean the same as *features*; that is, *the different parts of which a face is composed.*

Glo. To Dover.

Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charg'd at peril—

Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him answer that.

Glo. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course[7].

Reg. Wherefore to Dover?

Glo. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh rash[8] boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endur'd, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled[9] fires: yet, poor old heart,
He holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that dearn[10] time,
Thou should'st have said, *Good porter, turn the key;*
All cruels else subscrib'd[11]:—But I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

Corn. See it shalt thou never:—Fellows, hold the chair:
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot[12].

Glo. He, that will think to live till he be old,

[7] So in Macbeth:—

"They have *chain'd me to a stake;* I cannot fly,
But, bear-like, I must fight the *course.*"

[8] The folio reads, "*stick* boarish fangs." To *rash* is the old hunting term for the stroke made by a wild boar with his fangs.

[9] i. e. *starred.*

[10] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, "that *sterne* time." *Dearn* is *dreary.* The reading of the folio is countenanced by Chapman's version of the 24th Iliad:—

"In this so *sterne* a time
Of night and danger."

[11] i. e. *yielded, submitted to the necessity of the occasion.*

[12] This horrible exhibition is not more sanguinary than that of some contemporary dramas. In Selimus, Emperor of the Turks, one of the sons of Bajazet, *pulls out the eyes* of an Aga on the stage, and says:—

"Yes, thou shalt live, but never see that day,

Give me some help:—O cruel! O ye gods!

Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.

Corn. If you see vengeance,—

Serv. Hold your hand, my lord:
I have serv'd you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you,
Than now to bid you hold.

Reg. How now, you dog?

Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel; What do you mean?

Corn. My villain[13]! [*Draws, and runs at him.*

Serv. Nay, then come on, and take the chance of anger.

[*Draws. They fight.* CORN. *is wounded.*

Reg. Give me thy sword.— [*To another* Serv.
A peasant stand up thus!

Serv. O, I am slain!—My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him:—O! [*Dies.*

Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it:—Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?

Glo. All dark and comfortless.—Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit[14] this horrid act.

Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture[15] of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.

Wanting the tapers that should give thee light.
[*Pulls out his eyes.*"

Immediately after his hands are cut off on the stage. In Marston's Antonio's Revenge, 1602, Piero's tongue is torn out on the stage.

[13] *Villain* is here used in its original sense, of one in servitude.

[14] i. e. *requite.*

[15] *Overture* here means an *opening*, a *discovery*. "It was he who first laid the treasons open to us."

Glo. O my follies!
Then Edgar was abus'd.—
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

Reg. Go, thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.—How is't, my lord? How look you?

Corn. I have receiv'd a hurt:—Follow me, lady.—
Turn out that eyeless villain;—throw this slave
Upon the dunghill.—Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: Give me your arm.

[*Exit* CORNWALL, *led by* REGAN;—*Servants unbind* GLOSTER, *and lead him out.*

1 *Serv.* [I'll never care what wickedness I do[16],
If this man come to good.

2 *Serv.* If she live long,
And, in the end, meet the old course of death[17],
Women will all turn monsters.

1 *Serv.* Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would; his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.

2 *Serv.* Go thou; I'll fetch some flax, and whites of eggs[18],
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!]

[*Exeunt severally.*

[16] This short dialogue is only found in the quartos. It is, as Theobald observes, full of nature. Servants could hardly see such barbarity committed without pity; and the vengeance that they presume must overtake the actors of it, is a sentiment and doctrine well worthy of the stage and of the great moral poet.

[17] i. e. *die a natural death.*

[18] Steevens asserted that this passage was ridiculed by Ben Jonson in The Case is Altered. Mr. Gifford has shown the folly and falsehood of the assertion; and that it was only a common allusion to a method of stanching blood practised in the poet's time by every barber-surgeon and old woman in the kingdom.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The Heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edgar.

YET better thus, and known[1] to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest, and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome then[2],
Thou unsubstantial air, that I embrace!
The wretch, that thou hast blown unto the worst,
Owes nothing to thy blasts.—But who comes here?—

Enter GLOSTER, *led by an old Man.*

My father, poorly led?—World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age[3].

Old Man. O my good lord, I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glo. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,

[1] I once thought we should read *unknown*; but Edgar's reasoning seems to be, "It is better to be thus, and know that one is contemned, than in a condition where, though openly flattered, one is still secretly contemned."

[2] The next two lines and a half are not in the quartos.

[3] "O world! if reverses of fortune and changes such as I now see and feel, from ease and affluence to poverty and misery, did not show us the little value of life, we should never submit with any kind of resignation to death, the necessary consequences of old age; we should cling to life more strongly than we do."

Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

Glo. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: Full oft 'tis seen,
Our needs secure us[4], and our mere defects
Prove our commodities.—Ah, dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch[5],
I'd say, I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now? Who's there?

Edg. [*Aside.*] O gods! Who is't can say, *I am at the worst?*
I am worse than e'er I was.

Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And worse I may be yet; The worst is not,
So long as we can say, *This is the worst*[6].

Old Man. Fellow, where goest?

Glo. Is it a beggar man?

Old Man. Madman and beggar too.

Glo. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: My son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since:
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;
They kill us for their sport[7].

[4] The old copy has, "Our *meanes*," possibly a typographical error for *needes*: the words being easily confounded in old MSS. The context shows that *needes* was probably what the poet wrote.

[5] So in another scene, "I *see* it *feelingly*."

[6] i. e. *while we live*; for while we yet continue to have a sense of feeling, something worse than the present may still happen. He recalls his former rash conclusion.

[7] "Dii nos quasi pilas homines habent."
Plaut. Captiv. Prol. i. 22.
Thus also in Sidney's Arcadia, lib. ii.—

Edg. How should this be?—
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Ang'ring itself and others. [*Aside.*]—Bless thee, master!

Glo. Is that the naked fellow?

Old Man. Ay, my lord.

Glo. Then, 'pr'ythee, get thee gone[8]: If, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way to Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Whom I'll entreat to lead me.

Old Man. Alack, sir! he is mad.

Glo. 'Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure:
Above the rest, be gone.

Old Man. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit.*

Glo. Sirrah, naked fellow.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.—I cannot daub[9] it further. [*Aside.*

Glo. Come hither, fellow.

Edg. [*Aside.*] And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.

Glo. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way, and foot-path.
Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits:
Bless thee, good man's son[10], from the foul fiend!

" Wretched human kinde
Balles to the starres," &c.

[8] The folio reads " Get thee away," leaving the metre defective.

[9] i. e. *disguise it.*
" So smooth he *daub'd* his vice with show of virtue."
King Richard III.

[10] The quarto has, " Bless the good man."

[Five fiends[11] have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as *Obidicut; Hobbididance*, prince of dumbness; *Mahu*, of stealing; *Modo*, of murder; *Flibbertigibbet*, of mopping and mowing; who since possesses chambermaids and waitingwomen[12]. So, bless thee, master!]

Glo. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heaven's plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched,
Makes thee the happier:—Heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous, and lust-dieted man,
That braves your ordinance[13], that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough.—Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glo. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in[14] the confined deep:

[11] "The devil in Ma. Mainy confessed his name to be *Modu*, and that he had besides himself *seven other spirits*, and all of them captaines and of great fame. Then Edmundes (the exorcist) began againe with great earnestness, and all the company cried out, &c.——so as both that wicked prince Modu *and his company* might be cast out."—*Harsnet*, p. 163. This passage will account for "five fiends having been in poor Tom at once."

[12] "If she have a little helpe of the mother, epilepsie, or cramp, to teach her role her eyes, wrie her mouth, gnash her teeth, starte with her body, hold her armes and handes stiffe, make antike faces, grinne, *mow and mop* like an ape, then no doubt the young girle is owle-blasted, and *possessed*."—*Harsnet*, p. 136. The five devils here mentioned are the names of five of those who were made to act in this farce three *chambermaids*, or *waiting women*, in Mr. Edmund Peckham's family. The reader will now perceive why a *coquette* is called "*flebergibbit* or titifill" by Cotgrave. See Act iii. Sc. 4, note 25. The passage in crotchets is omitted in the folio.

[13] The old copy reads, "That *slaves* your ordinance." The emendation is by Warburton, and is fully sustained by the reading of the quartos, "That *stands* your ordinance," i. e. *withstands* it.

[14] *In* is here put for *on*, as in other places of these plays.

Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear,
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.
Edg. Give me thy arm;
Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before the* DUKE *of* ALBANY'S *Palace*

Enter GONERIL *and* EDMUND; Steward *meeting them.*

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel, our mild husband[1]
Not met us on the way:—Now, where's your master?
Stew. Madam, within; but never man so chang'd:
I told him of the army that was landed;
He smil'd at it: I told him, you were coming;
His answer was, *The worse:* of Gloster's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot;
And told me, I had turn'd the wrong side out:—
What most he should dislike, seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.
Gon. Then shall you go no further.
[*To* EDMUND.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs,
Which tie him to an answer: Our wishes, on the way,
May prove effects[2]. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters, and conduct his powers:

[1] It must be remembered that Albany, the husband of Goneril, disliked the scheme of oppression and ingratitude at the end of the first act.

[2] *i. e.* "The wishes which we expressed to each other on the way hither, may be completed, may take effect." Perhaps alluding to the destruction of her husband."

I must change arms[3] at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a Favour.*
Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air[4];
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloster!
[*Exit* EDMUND.
O, the difference of man, and man!
To thee a woman's services are due;
My fool usurps my body[5].

Stew. Madam, here comes my lord.
[*Exit* Steward.

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle[6].

Alb. O Goneril.
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face—[I fear your disposition[7]:
That nature, which contemns its origin,

[3] The folio prints erroneously *names*.

[4] She bids him decline his head, that she might give him a kiss (the steward being present), and that might appear only to him as a whisper.

[5] Quarto A reads, "my *foot* usurp my *body*." Quarto B, "my *foot* usurps my *head*." Quarto C, "a *fool* usurps my *bed*." The folio reads, "my *fool* usurps my *body*."

[6] Alluding to the proverb, "It is a poor dog that is not *worth the whistling*." Goneril's meaning seems to be, "There was a time when you would have thought me worth the calling to you,' reproaching him for not having summoned her to consult with on the present occasion.

[7] These words, and the following passages in brackets are not in the folio. They are necessary to explain the reasons of the detestation which Albany here expresses to his wife.

Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver[8] and disbranch
From her material sap[9], perforce must wither,
And come to deadly use[10].

Gon. No more: the text is foolish.

Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited?
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity[a] must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.]

Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering; [that not know'st,

[8] So in Macbeth.—

"Slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse."

See vol. ix. p. 76, note 8.

[9] "She who breaks the bonds of filial duty, and becomes wholly alienated from her father, must wither and perish, like a branch separated from that *trunk* or *body* which supplied it with *sap*." There is a peculiar propriety in the use of the word *material materia*, Lat. signifying the trunk or body of the tree.

[10] Alluding to the use that witches and enchanters are said to make of *withered branches* in their charms. "A fine insinuation in the speaker, that she was ready for the most unnatural mischief, and a preparative of the poet to her plotting with the bastard against her husband's life."—*Warburton.* Dr. Warburton might have adduced the passage from Macbeth above quoted in support of his ingenious interpretation.

[a] The quartos misprint *Humanly*.

Fools do those villains pity, who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief[11]. Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land;
With plumed helm thy slayer begins threats;
Whilst thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and cry'st,
Alack! why does he so?]

Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid, as in woman[12].

Gon. O vain fool!

[*Alb.* Thou changed and false-cover'd[13] thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature[14]. Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood[15],
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones;—Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

Gon. Marry, your manhood now!—

[11] Goneril means to say that "none but fools would be excited to commiserate those who are prevented from executing their malicious designs, and punished for their evil intention." Malone doubts whether Goneril alludes to her father, but surely there cannot be a doubt that she does, and to the *pity* for his sufferings expressed by Albany, whom she means indirectly to call a *fool* for expressing it.

[12] That is, "Diabolic qualities appear not so horrid in the devil, to whom they belong, as in woman, who unnaturally assumes them."

[13] The old copies read, "Thou changed and *felfe-couer'd* thing," of which no sense can be made. It is evidently a misprint for *falfe-couer'd*. What follows clearly shows this:—

"Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee."

[14] It has been already observed that *feature* was often used for *form* or person in general, the *figure of the whole body*. See Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act ii. Sc. 4, note 5.

[15] *My blood* is *my passion, my inclination.*

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?][16]

Mess. O, my good lord! the Duke of Cornwall's dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloster.

Alb. Gloster's eyes!

Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enrag'd,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead:
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.

Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge!—But, O poor Gloster!
Lost he his other eye?

Mess. Both, both, my lord.—
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'Tis from your sister.

Gon. [*Aside.*] One way I like this well[17]·
But being widow, and my Gloster with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: Another way,
The news is not so tart.—I'll read and answer. [*Exit.*

Alb. Where was his son, when they did take his eyes?

Mess. Come with my lady hither.

Alb. He is not here.

Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.

Alb. Knows he the wickedness?

[16] The passages in brackets are only in the quartos.

[17] Goneril's plan was to poison her sister, to marry Edmund, to murder Albany, and to get possession of the whole kingdom. As the death of Cornwall facilitated the last part of her scheme, she was pleased at it; but disliked it, as it put it in the power of her sister to marry Edmund.

Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd against him;
And quit the house on purpose, that their punishment
Might have the freer course.

Alb. Gloster, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes.—Come hither, friend;
Tell me what more thou knowest. [*Exeunt.*

[SCENE III[1]. *The* French *Camp near* Dover.

Enter KENT, *and a* Gentleman[2].

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason[3]?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger, that his personal return was most required, and necessary.

[1] This scene is left out in the folio copy, but is necessary to continue the story of Cordelia, whose behaviour is most beautifully painted.

[2] The gentleman whom he sent in the foregoing act with letters to Cordelia.

[3] "The king of France being no longer a necessary personage, it was fit that some pretext for getting rid of him should be formed before the play was too near advanced towards a conclusion. Decency required that a monarch should not be silently shuffled into the pack of insignificant characters; and therefore his dismission (which could be effected only by a sudden recall to his own dominions) was to be accounted for before the audience. For this purpose, among others, the present scene was introduced. It is difficult to say what use could have been made of the king, had he appeared at the head of his own armament, and survived the murder of his queen. His conjugal concern on the occasion might have weakened the effect of Lear's paternal sorrow; and being an object of respect as well as pity, he would naturally have divided the spectator's attention, and thereby diminished the consequence of Albany Edgar, and Kent, whose exemplary virtues deserved to be ultimately placed in the most conspicuous point of view."—*Steevens.*

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Mareschal of France, Monsieur le Fer.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir[4]; she took them. read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd, she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.

Kent. O, then it mov'd her.

Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove[5]
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once; her smiles and tears
Were like;—a better way[6]. Those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd[a].—In brief, sorrow

[4] The old copy reads, "I say." Theobald made the correction.

[5] The old copy has "streme;" evidently an error.

[6] Both the quartos read, "were like a *better way*." Steevens reads, upon the suggestion of Theobald, "a better *day*," with a long and somewhat ingenious, though unsatisfactory argument in defence of it. Warburton reads, "a *wetter May*," which is plausible enough. Malone adopts part of his emendation, and reads, "a better *May*." I follow the reading of the old copies, with a different punctuation. Cordelia's smiles and tears were *like* the conjunction of sunshine and rain, in a *better way or manner*, *i.e.* exceeded that phenomenon in *amenity*:—

"In brief, sorrow
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it."

[a] There are passages in which the same simile occurs in Sidney's Arcadia, ed. 1593, pp. 168 and 244, and in "A Courtlie Controversie of Cupid's Cautels," 1578, p. 289. A similar beautiful thought in Middleton's Game of Chess has caught the eye of Milton:—

"The holy dew lies like a pearl
Dropt from the *opening eyelids of the morn*
Upon the bashful rose."

Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.

Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once, or twice, she heav'd the name of *father*
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried, *Sisters! sisters!—Shame of ladies! sisters! Kent! father! sisters! What? i' the storm? i' the night?*
Let pity not be believed[7] *!*—There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd[8]: then away she started
To deal with grief alone.

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions[9];
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?

Gent. No.

Kent. Was this before the king return'd?

Gent. No, since.

Kent. Well, sir; The poor distressed Lear's i' the town:
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.

Gent. Why, good sir?

Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her

[7] i. e. *let not pity be supposed to exist.* "It is not impossible but Shakespeare might have formed this fine picture of Cordelia's agony from holy writ, in the conduct of Joseph, who, being no longer able to restrain the vehemence of his affection, commanded all his retinue from his presence; and then *wept aloud*, and discovered himself to his brethren."—*Theobald.*

[8] i. e. *And moisten'd the exclamations with tears.* The quartos have erroneously, "and clamour moisten'd *her*."

[9] *Conditions* are *dispositions.*

To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters,—these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!

Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not!

Gent. 'Tis so, they are afoot.

Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause[10]
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me.] [*Exeunt*

Scene IV. *The same. A Tent.*

Enter Cordelia, Physician, *and* Soldiers.

Cor. Alack, 'tis he; why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea: singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter[1], and furrow weeds,
With harlocks[2], hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel[3], and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.—A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an* Officer.]—

[10] i. e. *important business.*

[1] i. e. *fumitory*, written by the old herbalists *fumitery*. Mr. Boucher suggests that *furrow* should be *farrow*, ƿæɳ, *empty*.

[2] The quartos read *hardocks*, the folio *hardokes*. Drayton mentions *harlocks* in one of his Eclogues:—

"The honey-suckle, the *harlocke*,
The lily, and the lady-smocke," &c.

Perhaps the *charlock*, sinapis arvensis, or *wild mustard*, may be meant.

[3] *Darnel*, according to Gerard, is the *most hurtful of weeds* among corn.

What can man's wisdom,
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He, that helps him, take all my outward worth.

Phy. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All bless'd secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant, and remediate,
In the good man's distress[4]!—Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it[5].

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them.—O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France
My mourning, and important[6] tears, hath pitied.
No blown[7] ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our ag'd father's right:
Soon may I hear, and see him. [*Exeunt.*

[4] The folio has *desires*, instead of *distress*.

[5] i. e. *the reason which should guide it.*

[6] *Important* for *importunate*, as in other places of these plays. See Comedy of Errors, Act v. Sc. 1. The folio reads *importuned*.

[7] i. e. *No inflated, no swelling pride.*

"Quam bene te ambitio mersit vanissima, ventus,
Et tumidos tumidæ vos superastis aquæ."
Beza on the Spanish Armada.

So in The Little French Lawyer of Beaumont and Fletcher:—

"I come with no *blown* spirit to abuse you."

SCENE V. *A Room in* Gloster's *Castle.*

Enter REGAN *and* Steward.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Stew. Ay, madam.
Reg. Himself
In person there?
Stew. Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
Stew. No, madam.
Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?
Stew. I know not, lady.
Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being out,
To let him live; where he arrives, he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to despatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o' the enemy.
Stew. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.
Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow; stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.
Stew. I may not, madam;
My lady charg'd my duty in this business.
Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Something—I know not what:—I'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.
Stew. Madam, I had rather—
Reg. I know, your lady does not love her husband;
I am sure of that: and, at her late being here,

She gave strange œiliads[1], and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund: I know, you are of her bosom.
Stew. I, madam?
Reg. I speak in understanding; you are, I know it:
Therefore, I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd;
And more convenient is he for my hand,
Than for your lady's:—You may gather more[2].
If you do find him, pray you, give him this[3];
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Stew. 'Would I could meet him, madam! I would show
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI[a]. *The Country near* Dover.

Enter GLOSTER, *and* EDGAR, *dressed like a Peasant.*

Glo. When shall I come to the top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.
Glo. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible steep:
Hark, do you hear the sea?
Glo. No, truly[b].

[1] *Œillade*, Fr. *a cast*, or *significant glance of the eye.*
[2] i. e. *You may infer more than I have directly told you.*
[3] Perhaps a *ring*, or some *token*, is given to the steward by Regan to be conveyed to Edmund.
[a] This scene, and the stratagem by which Gloster is cured of his desperation, are wholly borrowed from Sidney's Arcadia, book ii.
[b] Something to complete the measure seems wanting in this or the foregoing hemistich. The quartos read as one line:—
"Horrible steep: hark, do you hear the sea?"

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glo. So may it be, indeed:
Methinks, thy voice is alter'd[3]; and thou speak'st
In better phrase, and matter, than thou didst.
Edg. Y'are much deceiv'd; in nothing am I
chang'd,
But in my garments.
Glo. Methinks, y'are better spoken.
Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place:—stand still.
—How fearful
And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows, and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Show scarce so gross as beetles: Half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire[4]; dreadful trade!
Methinks, he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond' tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock[5]; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight: The murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high;—I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple[6] down headlong.

[3] Edgar alters his voice in order to pass afterwards for a malignant spirit.

[4] "*Samphire* grows in great plenty on most of the sea-cliffs in this country: it is terrible to see how people gather it, hanging by a rope several fathom from the top of the impending rocks, as it were in the air."—*Smith's History of Waterford*, p. 315, edit. 1774. Dover Cliff was particularly resorted to for this plant, according to Drayton, Polyolbion, b. xviii.—

"Rob Dover's neighbouring cleeves of *samphire*, to excite
His dull and sickly taste, and stir up appetite."

It is still eaten as a pickle in those parts of England bordering on the southern coast.

[5] i. e. *her cock-boat.* Hence the term *cock-swain.*

[6] To *topple* is to *tumble:* the word is again used in Macbeth.

Glo. Set me where you stand.
Edg. Give me your hand: You are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.
Glo. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, is another purse; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking: Fairies, and gods,
Prosper it with thee! Go thou further off;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.
Edg. Now fare you well, good sir. [*Seems to go.*
Glo. With all my heart.
Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair,
Is done to cure it.
Glo. O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce; and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff, and loathed part of nature, should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O bless him!—
Now, fellow, fare thee well.
Edg. Gone, sir: farewell.—
[GLOSTER *leaps, and falls along.*
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft[7]: Had he been where he thought,
By this, had thought been past.—Alive, or dead?
Ho, you sir! friend!—Hear you, sir?—speak!
Thus might he pass indeed[8]:—Yet he revives:
What are you, sir?

So in Nashe's Lenten Stuffe, 1599:—"Fifty people *toppled* up their heels there."

[7] That is, *when life is willing to be destroyed.*

[8] i. e. *Thus might he die in reality.* We still use the word *passing* bell. So in King Henry VI. Part II.—
"Disturb him not, let him *pass* peaceably."

Glo. Away, and let me die.

Edg. Had'st thou been ought but gossomer[9], feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at eche[10] make not the altitude,
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell;
Thy life's a miracle: Speak yet again.

Glo. But have I fallen, or no?

Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn[11]:
Look up a-height;—the shrill-gorg'd lark so far

[9] "The substance called *gossamer* is formed of the collected webs of flying spiders, and during calm weather in autumn sometimes fall in amazing quantities."—*Holt White.* Some think it the down of plants; others the vapour arising from boggy or marshy ground in warm weather. The etymon of this word, which has puzzled the lexicographers, is said to be *summer goose* or *summer gauze*, hence "gauze o' the summer," its well known name in the north. See *Horæ Momentæ Cravenæ, or the Craven Dialect Exemplified*, 1824, 8vo. p. 79.

[10] i. e. *drawn out at length*, or *each added to the other.* "*Eche*, exp. *draw out*, ab A. S. ȩlcan, ȩlcian, Diferre, vel à verb. to *eak*."—*Skinner, Etymolog.* Skinner is right in his last derivation, it is from the A. S. ȩacan, to *add.* Thus Chaucer, in The House of Fame, b. iii. v. 975:—

"Gan somewhat *to eche*
To this tiding in his speche."

And in Troilus and Cresseide, b. i. v. 706:—

"As doen these fooles, that hir sorrowes *eche*."

Pope changed this to *attacht*; Johnson would read *on end*; Steevens proposes *at reach.* Ignorance of our earlier language has been the stumbling-block of all these eminent critics. But Shakespeare himself affords examples in point:—

"'Tis to peize the time,
To *eche* it and to draw it out in length."
Merchant of Venice, 4to. 1600.

And Pericles, Act iii. Gower's Prologue:—

"With your fine fancies quaintly *eche*
What's dumb in show."

So in King Henry V. Chorus, 1st folio:—

"And *eche* out our performance with your mind."

[11] i. e. *this chalky boundary of England.*

Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.

Glo. Alack, I have no eyes.—
Is wretchedness depriv'd that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.

Edg. Give me your arm:
Up:—So; How is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.

Glo. Too well, too well.

Edg. This is above all strangeness,
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?

Glo. A poor unfortunate beggar.

Edg. As I stood here below, methought, his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns welk'd[12], and wav'd like the enridged sea;
It was some fiend: Therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest[13] gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities[14], have preserv'd thee.

Glo. I do remember now; henceforth I'll bear
Affliction, till it do cry out itself,
Enough, *enough*, and *die*. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 'twould say,
The fiend, *the fiend:* he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free[15] and patient thoughts.—But who
comes here?

[12] *Welk'd* is marked with protuberances. This and *whelk* are probably only different forms of the same word. The *welk* is a small shellfish, so called, perhaps, because its shell is marked with convolved protuberant *ridges*. See vol. v. p. 348, note 11. The quartos erroneously print, "*enraged* sea."

[13] That is, *the purest; the most free from evil.* So in Timon of Athens:—"Roots! you *clear* gods!"

[14] By *men's impossibilities* is meant what men call *impossibilities*, what appear or are such to mere mortal beings.

[15] "Bear *free* and patient thoughts." *Free* here means *pure*, as in other places of these plays. See vol. iii. p. 388, note 4; vol. iv. p. 39, note 5.

Enter LEAR, *fantastically dressed up with Flowers.*

The safer sense[16] will ne'er accommodate
His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining[17]; I am the king himself.

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect.—There's your press-money[18]. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper[19]: draw me a clothier's yard.—Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace;—this piece of toasted cheese will do't.—There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant.—Bring up the brown bills[20].—O, well

[16] "The *safer sense*," says Mr. Blakeway, "seems to me to mean the *eyesight*, which, says Edgar, will never more serve the unfortunate Lear so well as those which Gloster has remaining will serve him, who is now returned to a right mind. Horace terms the eyes 'oculi *fidelis*,' and the *eyesight* may be called the *safer sense* in allusion to the proverb 'Seeing is believing.' Gloster afterwards laments the *stiffness of his vile sense*."

[17] The folio has, "for *crying*;" an evident error.

[18] It is evident from the whole of this speech that Lear fancies himself amid the bustle and preparations for war—the recruiting, training, practising, &c. The military associations about him are running in his head. For the meaning of *press money*, see the first scene of Hamlet, note 11, which will also serve to explain the passage in Act v. Sc. 3:—

"And turn our *imprest* lances in our eyes."

[19] "Or if thou'lt not thy archery forbear,
To some base rustick do thyself prefer;
And when corn's sown, or grown into the ear,
Practice thy quiver and turn *crow-keeper*."
Drayton, Idea the Forty-eighth.

Ascham, in speaking of *awkward shooters*, says:—"Another cowreth down, and layeth out his buttockes as thoughe he would *shoote at crowes*."

The subsequent expression of Lear, "draw me a clothier's yard," Steevens thinks, alludes to the old ballad of Chevy Chase:—

"An arrow of a *cloth yard* long,
Up to the head he drew," &c.

[20] *Brown bills*, i. e. *battleaxes*.

flown, bird!—i' the clout, i' the clout; hewgh!—Give the word[21].

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glo. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril!—with a white beard!—They flatter'd me like a dog; and told me, I had white hairs in my beard, ere the black ones were there. To say *ay*, and *no*, to every thing I said!—Ay and no too was no good divinity[22]. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found them, there I smelt them out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was every thing: 'tis a lie; I am not ague-proof.

Glo. The trick[23] of that voice I do well remember: Is't not the king?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life: what was thy cause?—
Adultery?

[21] Lear is here raving of *archery*, *falconry*, and a *battle*, jumbled together in quick transition. "*Well flown bird*" was the falconer's expression when the hawk was successful in her flight; it is so used in A Woman Kill'd with Kindness. The *clout* is the *white mark* at which archers aim. See Love's Labour's Lost, Act iv. Sc. 1, note 11. By "*give the word*," the *watchword* in a camp is meant. The quartos read, "O well flown bird *in the ayre*, hugh, give the word."

[22] It has been proposed to read, "To say *ay* and *no* to everything I said ay and no *to*, was no good divinity." Besides the inaccuracy of construction in the passage as it stands in the text; it does not appear how it could be flattery to *dissent* from as well as *assent* to everything Lear said. It may, however, mean that they said ay or no, as he said ay or no; but more probably that they had double thoughts, and said *ay* to flatter him, when they said *no* to themselves, and vice versa.

[23] *Trick* is a word used for the air, or peculiarity in a face, voice, or gesture, which distinguishes it from others. We still say he has a *trick* of winking with his eyes," &c. See vol. iv. p. 255, note 8.

Thou shalt not die; Die for adultery! No:
The wren goes to't, and the small gilded fly
Does lecher in my sight. Let copulation thrive,
For Gloster's bastard son was kinder to his father,
Than my daughters got 'tween the lawful sheets.
To't luxury[24] pell-mell, for I lack soldiers.—
Behold yond' simpering dame,
Whose face between her forks presageth snow[25];
That minces[26] virtue, and does shake the head
To hear of pleasure's name;
The fitchew, nor the soiled horse[27], goes to't
With a more riotous appetite.
Down from the waist they are centaurs,
Though women all above;
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiends'; there's hell, there's darkness, there is the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench, consumption;—Fye, fye, fye! pah; pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination: there's money for thee.

Glo. O, let me kiss that hand!

Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.

[24] *Luxury*, i. e. *incontinence.* See vol. vii. p. 269, note 4.

[25] The construction is, "Whose face presageth snow between her forks." So in Timon of Athens, Act iv. Sc. 3:—

"Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow
That lies on Dian's lap."

See Cotgrave's Dict. in. v. *Fourcheure.*

[26] i. e. *puts on an outward affected seeming of virtue.* Thus Cotgrave in v. *Mineux-se.* "*Outward seeming*, also squeamish, quaint, coy, that *minces it* exceedingly." He also explains it under "*Faire la sadinette, to mince* it, nicefie it, be very squeamish, backward, or coy."

[27] i. e. *The fitchew* is *the polecat.* A *soiled horse* is a horse that has been fed with hay and corn during the winter, and is turned out in the spring to take the first flush of grass, or has it cut and carried to him. This at once cleanses the animal, and fills him with blood. In the old copies the preceding as well as the latter part of Lear's speech is printed as prose. It is too rhythmical to be left as mere prose, yet is rather lyric than heroic metre.

Glo. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought.—Dost thou know me?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love.—Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.

Glo. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.

Edg. I would not take this from report;—it is,
And my heart breaks at it.

Lear. Read.

Glo. What, with the case of eyes?

Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: Yet you see how this world goes.

Glo. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes, with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yon' justice rails upon yon' simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: Change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

Glo. Ay, sir.

Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou might'st behold the great image of authority: a dog's obey'd in office.

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand:
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small[28] vices do appear;

[28] The folio has "*great* vices."

Robes, and furr'd gowns, hide all[29]. Plate[30] sin with gold,
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks:
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em[31]:
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not.—Now, now, now, now:
Pull off my boots:—harder, harder; so.

Edg. O, matter and impertinency[32] mix'd!
Reason in madness!

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloster:
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither.
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl, and cry[33]:—I will preach to thee; mark me.

Glo. Alack, alack the day!

[29] From "hide all" to "accuser's lips" is wanting in the quartos.

[30] The old copies read *Place.* Pope has the merit of this excellent emendation.

[31] i. e. *support* or *uphold* them. So Chapman in the Widow's Tears, 1612:—

"Admitted! ay, into her heart, and I'll *able* it."

Again, in his version of the twenty-third Iliad:—

"I'll *able* this
For five revolved years."

[32] *Impertinency* here is used in its old legitimate sense of *something not belonging to the subject.*

[33] "The childe feeles that, the man that feeling knowes,
Which *cries first borne,* the presage of his life," &c.
Sidney's Arcadia, lib. ii.

The passage is, however, evidently taken from Pliny, as translated by Philemon Holland, Proeme to b. vii.—"Man alone, poor wretch [nature] hath laid all naked upon the bare earth, even on his birthday to *cry and wrawle* presently from the very first houre that he is borne into this world."—*Douce.*

Lear. When we are born, we cry, that we are come
To this great stage of fools;——This' a good block[34]?
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put it in proof;
And when I have stolen upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill.

Enter a Gentleman, *with* Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is, lay hand upon him.—Sir,
Your most dear daughter——

Lear. No rescue? What, a prisoner? I am even
The natural fool of fortune[35].—Use me well;
You shall have ransome. Let me have a surgeon,
I am cut to the brains.

Gent. You shall have any thing.

Lear. No seconds? All myself?
Why, this would make a man, a man of salt[36],

[34] *This'*, here and elsewhere, is an ellipsis for *This is.* Upon the king's saying "I will preach to thee," the poet seems to have meant him to pull off his hat, and keep turning it and feeling it, till the idea of *felt*, which the good *hat* or *block* was made of, raises the stratagem in his brain of shoeing a troop of horse with the [same substance] which he held and moulded between his hands. So in Decker's Gull's Hornbook, 1609:—"That cannot observe the tune of his hatband, nor know what fashioned *block* is most kin to his head: for in my opinion the brain cannot chuse his *felt* well." This delicate stratagem is mentioned by Ariosto:—

"Fece nel cadar strepito quanto
Avesse avuto sotto i piedi il *feltro*."

It had, however, been actually put in practice about fifty years before Shakespeare was born, at a tournament held at Lisle before Henry VIII. [Oct. 13, 1513], where the horses, to prevent their sliding on a black stone pavement, *were shod with felt* or *flocks* (*feltro* sive *tomento*). See Lord Herbert's Life of King Henry VIII. p. 41.

[35] So in Romeo and Juliet:—"O, I am fortune's fool."

[36] "A man of *salt*" is a man of *tears*. In All's Well that Ends Well, we meet with "Your *salt tears* head." And in Troilus and Cressida, "the *salt* of broken *tears*." Again, in Coriolanus:—

To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
[Ay, and laying autumn's dust[37].
Gent. Good sir,—]
Lear. I will die bravely,
Like a smug bridegroom. What! I will be jovial.
Come, come; I am a king, my masters, know you that?
Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.
Lear. Then there's life in't[38]. Come, an you get it, you shall get it by running. Sa, sa, sa, sa[39].
[*Exit, running;* Attendants *follow.*
Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch;
Past speaking of in a king!—Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.
Edg. Hail, gentle sir.
Gent. Sir, speed you: What's your will?
Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?
Gent. Most sure, and vulgar: every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.
Edg. But, by your favour,
How near's the other army?
Gent. Near, and on speedy foot, the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought[40].
Edg. I thank you, sir: that's all.
Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is here,
Her army is mov'd on.
Edg I thank you, sir. [*Exit* Gent.
Glo. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;

"He has betray'd your business, and given up,
For certain drops of *salt*, your city Rome."

[37] This line, and the words "Good sir," are not in the folio.

[38] i. e. *The case is not yet desperate.* So in Antony and Cleopatra:—"There's sap in't yet."

[39] See p. 411, and p. 422, note 14, ante.

[40] i. e. *the main body is expected to be descried every hour.*

Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!

Edg. Well pray you, father.

Glo. Now, good sir, what are you?

Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows[41]:
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows[42],
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.

Glo. Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benizon of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter Steward.

Stew. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first fram'd flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember[43]: The sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glo. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to it. [EDGAR *opposes.*

Stew. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Dar'st thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

Stew. Let go, slave, or thou diest.

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait[44], and let poor

[41] The quartos read, "*by* fortune's blows."

[42] *Feeling* is probably used here for *felt.* Sorrows known not by relation, but by experience. Warburton explains it, "Sorrows past and present."

[43] *i. e.* "Quickly recollect the past offences of thy life, and recommend thyself to heaven."

[44] *Gang your gait* is a common expression in the north. In the last rebellion the Scotch soldiers, when they had finished their exercise, were dismissed by this phrase, "*Gang your gaits.*"

volk pass. And ch'ud ha' been zwagger'd out of my life, 'twould not ha' been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near the old man; keep out, che vor'ye[45], or ise try whether your costard[46] or my ballow[47] be the harder: Ch'ill be plain with you.

Stew. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Ch'ill pick your teeth, zir; Come; no matter vor your foins[48].

[*They fight; and* EDGAR *knocks him down.*

Stew. Slave, thou hast slain me:—Villain, take my purse;
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters, which thou find'st about me,
To Edmund earl of Gloster; seek him out
Upon the British[49] party:——O, untimely death!
[*Dies.*

Edg. I know thee well: A serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress,
As badness would desire.

Glo. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.
Let's see his pockets; these letters, that he speaks of,
May be my friends.—He's dead: I am only sorry
He had no other deathsman. Let us see:
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:
To know our enemies' minds, we'd rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[45] i. e. *I warn you.* When our ancient writers have occasion to introduce a rustic, they commonly allot him the Somersetshire dialect. Golding, in his translation of the second book of Ovid's Metamorphoses, makes Mercury, assuming the appearance of a clown, speak with the provinciality of Edgar.

[46] i. e. *head.* See vol. ii. p. 220, note 12.

[47] A *ballow* is a provincial word for a *pole* or *staff.* One of the quartos has *bat.*

[48] i. e. *thrusts.* See vol. i. p. 231, note 1.

[49] The folio has, "Upon the *English* party." And *death* is repeated at the end of the line.

[*Reads.*] "Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: Then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.—Your (wife so I would say), affectionate servant, GONERIL."

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will[50]!—
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange, my brother!—Here, in the sands,
Thee I'll rake up, the post unsanctified[51]
Of murderous lechers: and, in the mature time,
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practis'd duke[52]: for him 'tis well,
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glo. The king is mad: How stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling[53]
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs;
And woes, by wrong imaginations, lose

[50] The quartos have:—

"O undistinguished space of woman's *wit*."

The folio has:—

"Oh *indinguish'd space* of Woman's *will*."

The meaning of the passage seems to be:—"O, how undistinguishing and unlimited is the blind wilful lust of woman! How immense is the difference between the virtuous Albany and Edmund, for whom he is to be exchanged." *Undistinguished* for *undistinguishing*; the passive participle for the active is in keeping with the poet's practice in similar cases.

[51] "Thee I'll *rake up*, the post *unsanctified*," &c. i. e. *I'll cover thee.* In Staffordshire to *rake* the fire is to cover it for the night. *Unsanctified* refers to his want of burial in consecrated ground.

[52] That is, *the Duke of Albany*, whose death is machinated by practice or treason.

[53] *Ingenious feeling.* Bullokar, in his Expositor, interprets "*ingenious* by *quick conceited*," i. e. *acute.* This makes Warburton's paraphrase unnecessary.

The knowledge of themselves. [*Drum afar off.*
Edg. Give me your hand:
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum.
Come, father, I'll bestow you with a friend.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *A Tent in the* French *Camp.* LEAR *on a Bed, asleep:* Physician, Gentleman[1], *and Others attending.*

Enter CORDELIA *and* KENT.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live, and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.
Kent. To be acknowledg'd, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more, nor clipp'd, but so.
Cor. Be better suited[2]:
These weeds are memories[3] of those worser hours;
I pr'ythee, put them off.
Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known, shortens my made intent[4]:
My boon I make it, that you know me not,
Till time and I think meet.
Cor. Then be it so, my good lord.—How does the king? [*To the* Physician.
Phys. Madam, sleeps still.
Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!

[1] In the folio the *Gentleman* and the *Physician* is one and the same person.

[2] i. e. *be better dressed, put on a better suit of clothes.*

[3] *Memories* are *memorials.* See vol. iii. p. 31, note 1.

[4] A *made intent* is an *intent formed.* We say in common language to *make* a design, and to *make* a resolution. Mr. Collier's folio substitutes *main* for made.

The untun'd and jarring senses, O, wind up,
Of this child-changed father[5]!

Phys. So please your majesty,
That we may wake the king? he hath slept long.

Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?

Phys. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep,
We put fresh garments on him.

Kent. Good madam, be by, when we do awake him·
I doubt not of his temperance.

[*Cor.* Very well.

Phys. Please you, draw near.—Louder the musick there[6].]

Cor. O my dear father! Restoration[7], hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!

Kent. Kind and dear princess!

Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challeng'd pity of them. Was this a face
To be expos'd[8] against the warring winds?
[To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?

[5] That is, *changed by his children*; a father whose jarring senses have been untuned by the monstrous ingratitude of his daughters. So *care-crazed*, crazed *by* care; *woe-wearied*, wearied *by* woe, &c.

[6] This and the foregoing speech are not in the folio. It has been already observed that Shakespeare considered *soft music* as favourable to sleep. Lear, we may suppose, had been thus composed to rest; and now the Physician desires *louder* music to be played, for the purpose of waking him. So again in Pericles, Cerimon, to recover Thaisa, who had been thrown into the sea, says:—

"The *rough* and woeful musick that we have,
Cause it to sound, beseech you."

Again in The Winter's Tale:—

"*Musick, awake her*, strike!"

[7] *Restoration* is no more than *recovery* personified.

[8] The folio has, "*opposed*," and "*jarring* winds."

In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch (poor perdu!)
With this thin helm[9]?] Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; And wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder, that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all[10].—He wakes; speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?

Lear. You do me wrong, to take me out o' the grave:—
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; When did you die[a]?

Cor. Still, still, far wide!

Phys. He's scarce awake; let him alone awhile.

[9] The lines in crotchets are not in the folio. The allusion is to the forlorn hope of an army, called in French *enfans perdus*; amongst other desperate adventures in which they were engaged, the night watches seem to have been a common one. Warburton is wrong in supposing that those ordered on such services were lightly or badly armed, the contrary is clearly the fact, and to such a fact is the allusion of the poet—"*Poor perdu*, you are exposed to the most dangerous situation, not with the most proper arms, but with a mere helmet of thin and hoary hair." The same allusion occurs in Davenant's Love and Honour, 1649:—

"I have endured
Another night would tire a *perdu*
More than a wet furrow and a great frost."

So in Beaumont and Fletcher's Little French Lawyer:—

"I am set here like a *perdu*,
To *watch* a fellow that has wronged my mistress."

[10] i. e. *had not all ended.* So in Timon of Athens:—

"And dispossess her *all*."

[a] The folio and two of the quartos have, "*Where* did you die?"

Lear. Where have I been?—Where am I?—Fair
day light?—
I am mightily abus'd[11].—I should even die with pity,
To see another thus.—I know not what to say.—
I will not swear these are my hands:—let's see;
I feel this pin prick. 'Would I were assur'd
Of my condition.
Cor. O! look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me;—
No, sir, you must not kneel[12].
Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward;
Not an hour more, nor less[13]; and, to deal plainly,
I fear, I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks, I should know you, and know this man:
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night: Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am, I am.
Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, 'faith. I pray,
weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.

[11] *i. e.* "I am strangely imposed upon by appearances; I am in a strange mist of uncertainty."

[12] "This circumstance is found in the old play of King Leir, apparently written by another hand, and published before any edition of Shakespeare's play had made its appearance. As it is always difficult to say whether such accidental resemblances proceed from imitation, or a similarity of thinking on the same occasion, I can only point out this to the reader, to whose determination I leave the question."—*Steevens.*

[13] The words "not an hour more nor less" are omitted in the quartos, and by Malone, Steevens, and others. I have followed the reading and arrangement of the folio.

I know, you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.

Cor. No cause, no cause.

Lear. Am I in France?

Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is cur'd[14] in him: [and yet it is danger
To make him even[15] o'er the time he has lost.]
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more,
Till further settling.

Cor. Will't please your highness walk?

Lear. You must bear with me:
'Pray now, forget and forgive: I am old, and foolish.

[*Exeunt* LEAR, CORDELIA, Physician, *and* Attendants.

[*Gent.* Holds it true, sir,
That the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?

Kent. Most certain, sir.

Gent. Who is conductor of his people?

Kent. As 'tis said,
The bastard son of Gloster.

Gent. They say, Edgar,
His banish'd son, is with the Earl of Kent
In Germany.

Kent. Report is changeable.
'Tis time to look about; the powers o' the kingdom
Approach apace.

Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody.

[14] The folio has *kill'd.*

[15] "To make him *even o'er* the time he has lost," is "to make the occurrences of it *plain* or *level* to his troubled mind." See Baret's Alvearie, 1573, E. 307. The words in brackets are not in the folio, and the scene ends with the words, "I am old and foolish."

Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Kent. My point and period will be throughly wrought,
Or well, or ill, as this day's battle's fought[16].]

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The Camp of the* British *Forces, near* Dover.

Enter, with Drums, and Colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Officers, Soldiers, *and Others.*

Edmund.

KNOW of the duke, if his last purpose hold;
Or, whether since he is advis'd by aught
To change the course: He's full of alteration,
And self-reproving:—bring his constant pleasure[1].

[*To an* Officer, *who goes out.*

Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.

Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.

Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me, but truly, but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?

Edm. In honour'd love.

Reg. But have you never found my brother's way
To the forefended[2] place?

[*Edm.* That thought abuses[3] you.

Reg. I am doubtful that you have been conjunct

[16] What is printed in crotchets is not in the folio. It is at least proper, if not necessary, and was perhaps only omitted by the players to abridge a play of very considerable length.

[1] i. e. *his settled resolution.* See Act i. Sc. 1, note 8.

[2] The lines in brackets are omitted in the folio.

[3] i. e. *imposes on you; you are deceived.*

And bosom'd with her, as far as we call hers.]

Edm. No, by mine honour, madam.

Reg. I never shall endure her: Dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.

Edm. Fear me not:—
She, and the duke her husband[4].

Enter, with Drum and Colours, ALBANY, GONERIL, *and* Soldiers.

[*Gon.* I had rather lose the battle, than that sister
Should loosen him and me.] [*Aside.*

Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met.—
Sir, this I hear,—The king is come to his daughter,
With others, whom the rigour of our state
Forc'd to cry out. [Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us as France invades our land,
Not bolds[5] the king.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly[a].]

Reg. Why is this reason'd?

Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy:
For these domestick and particular broils[6]

[4] i. e. *here she comes*, &c.

[5] "This business," says Albany, "touches us, as France invades our land, not as it *emboldens* or *encourages* the king to assert his former title." Thus in the ancient Interlude of Hycke Scorner:—

"Alas, that I had not one *to bolde* me."

Again, in Arthur Hall's translation of the fourth Iliad, 4to. 1581:—

"And Pallas *bolds* the Greeks," &c.

"To make *bolde*, to encourage, *animum addere.*"—*Baret.*

[a] What is between crotchets is omitted in the folio. The quarto has at the end of Albany's speech:—

"With others, whom I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose."

A mere paraphrase of words occurring just before.

[6] The quartos have it:—

"For these domestick *doore particulars.*"

Are not to[7] question here.

Alb. Let's then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.

[*Edm.* I shall attend you presently at your tent[8].]

Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?

Gon. No.

Reg. 'Tis most convenient; 'pray you, go with us.

Gon. O, ho! I know the riddle: [*Aside.*] I will go.

As they are going out, Enter EDGAR *disguised.*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.

Alb. I'll o'ertake you.—Speak.

[*Exeunt* EDMUND, REGAN, GONERIL, Officers, Soldiers, *and* Attendants.

Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion, that will prove
What is avouched there: If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases[9]. Fortune love you!

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again. [*Exit.*

Alb. Why, fare thee well; I will o'erlook thy paper.

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view, draw up your powers,

[7] The folio reads, *the* question; and two lines lower, *proceeding.*

[8] This speech is wanting in the folio.

[9] i. e. *all designs against your life will have an end.* These words are not in the quartos.

Here is the guess of their true strength and forces
By diligent discovery[10];—but your haste
Is now urg'd on you.

Alb. We will greet the time[11]. [*Exit.*

Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both! one? or neither? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive; To take the widow,
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side[12],
Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle; which being done,
Let her, who would be rid of him, devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear, and to Cordelia,—
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon: for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate[13]. [*Exit.*

[10] *i. e.* "the *conjecture*, or what we can gather by diligent *espial*, of their strength." So in King Henry IV. Part I. Act iv. Sc. 1:—

"Send *discoverers* forth
To know *the number of our enemies.*"

The passage has only been thought obscure for want of a right understanding of the word *discovery*, which neither Malone nor Steevens seem to have understood. Edmund must be supposed to give a paper to Albany.

[11] i. e. *be ready to meet the occasion.*

[12] *i. e.* "Hardly shall I be able to make my side (i. e. my *party*) good; to maintain the game." Steevens has shown that it was a phrase commonly used at cards. So in the Paston Letters, vol. iv. p. 155:—"Heydon's son hath *borne out the side* stoutly here," &c.

[13] *i. e.* "Such is my determination concerning Lear; as *for my state*, it requires now not *deliberation*, but *defence* and support."

SCENE II. *A Field between the two Camps.*

Alarum within. Enter, with Drum and Colours, LEAR, CORDELIA, *and their Forces; and exeunt.*

Enter EDGAR *and* GLOSTER[1].

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host; pray that the right may thrive:
If ever I return to you again,
I'll bring you comfort.

Glo. Grace go with you, sir! [*Exit* EDGAR.

Alarums; afterwards a Retreat. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man, give me thy hand, away;
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en:
Give me thy hand, come on.

Glo. No further, sir; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither:
Ripeness is all[2]: Come on.

Glo. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The British Camp near* DOVER.

Enter, in Conquest, with Drum and Colours, EDMUND; LEAR *and* CORDELIA, *as Prisoners;* Officers, Soldiers, *&c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away; good guard;
Until their greater pleasures first be known

[1] Those who are curious to know how far Shakespeare was indebted to the Arcadia, will find a chapter entitled "The Pitifull State and Storie of the Paphlagonian unkinde King, and his kinde Sonne; first related by the Sonne, then by the blinde Father," at p. 141 of the edition of 1590, 4to.

[2] i. e. *to be ready, prepared, is all.* So in Hamlet:—"If it be not now, yet it will come: *the readiness is all.*"

That are to censure[1] them.

Cor. We are not the first,
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst[2].
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else outfrown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters?

Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses, and who wins; who's in, who's out;—
And take upon us the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies[3]: And we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects[4] of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.

Edm. Take them away.

Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense[5]. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us, shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence, like foxes[6]. Wipe thine eyes;

[1] i. e. *to pass sentence or judgment on them.* So in Othello:—"Remains the *censure* of this hellish villain."

[2] That is, *the worst that fortune can inflict.*

[3] *i. e.* "As if we were angels, endowed with the power of prying into the original motives of action and the mysteries of conduct."

[4] *Packs* and *sects* are *combinations* and *parties.*

[5] "The thought is extremely noble, and expressed in a sublime of imagery that Seneca fell short of on a similar occasion:—'Ecce spectaculum dignum ad quod respiciat intenti operi suo deus: ecce par deo dignum vir fortis cum mala fortuna compositus.'"—*Warburton.*

[6] Alluding to the old practice of smoking foxes out of their holes. So in Harington's translation of Ariosto, b. xxvii. stan. 17:—

The goujeers shall devour them, flesh and fell[7],
Ere they shall make us weep: we'll see'em starve first.

Come. [*Exeunt* LEAR *and* CORDELIA, *guarded.*

Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.
Take thou this note[8]; [*Giving a Paper.*] go, follow them to prison:
One step I have advanc'd thee; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes: Know thou this,—that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword:—Thy great employment
Will not bear question[9]: either say, thou'lt do't,
Or thrive by other means.

Off. I'll do't, my lord.

Edm. About it; and write happy, when thou'st done.

"E'en as a *foxe* whom *smoke and fire* doth fright,
So as he dare not in the ground remaine,
Bolts out and through the *smoke and fire* he flieth
Into the tarriers mouth, and there he dieth."

[7] *The goujeers shall devour them, flesh and fell.*

The *goujeers*, i. e. *morbus Gallicus*. See Nares' Glossary or the Variorum Shakespeare. It was a common term of imprecation, and was followed by another from the same disease. We find it frequently written *good yeres*, as it stands in the folio. Mr. Knight gives a note from Tieck approvingly, in which he, a foreigner, accuses the editors of Shakespeare of having "understood the poet as little as their own language." Mr. Knight may be assured that both he and Tieck are in error on this occasion. I would simply ask how the *good years* were to consume the flesh and fell of Lear's daughters? a loathsome disease might. *Flesh* and *fell* is *flesh* and *skin*. Thus in The Speculum Vitæ, MS.—

"That alle men sal a domesday rise
Oute of their graves in *fleshe and felle*."

So in The Dyar's Playe, Chester Mysteries:—

"I made thee man of *flesh and fell*."

[8] This was a warrant signed by the Bastard and Goneril, for the execution of Lear and Cordelia, referred to in a subsequent scene by Edmund.

[9] i. e. *admit of debate.*

Mark,—I say instantly; and carry it so,
As I have set it down.

[*Off.* I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I will do it[10].] [*Exit* Officer.

Flourish. *Enter* ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, Officers, *and* Attendants.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: You have the captives
Who were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you; so to use them,
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.

Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention, and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances[11] in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. [At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend:
And the best quarrels, in the heat, are curs'd
By those that feel their sharpness:—
The question of Cordelia, and her father,
Requires a fitter place[12].]

Alb. Sir, by your patience,

[10] This speech is omitted in the folio, as are the words "and appointed guard" in a subsequent line.

[11] That is, *the lancemen we have hired by giving them press money.*

[12] *i. e.* "The determination of what shall be done with Cordelia and her father, should be reserved for greater privacy." The passage in brackets is not in the folio.

I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.

Reg. That's as we list to grace him.
Methinks, our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission[13] of my place and person;
The which immediacy[14] may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.

Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace[15] he doth exalt himself,
More than in your advancement[16].

Reg. In my rights,
By me invested, he compeers the best.

Gon. That were the most, if he should husband you[17].

Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.

Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye, that told you so, look'd but a-squint[18].

Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full flowing stomach.—General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine[19]:
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master.

Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?

[13] *Commission* for *authority.*

[14] *Immediacy* is, I think, close and immediate connexion with me, and direct authority from me. *Immediate* is the reading of the quartos.

[15] *Grace* here means, *noble deportment.*

[16] The folio reads, "your *addition.*"

[17] *i. e.* "If he were married to you, you could not say more than this, nor could he enjoy greater power." In the folio this line is given to Albany.

[18] Alluding to the proverb, "Love being jealous makes a good eye look *a-squint.*" So Milton:—

"And gladly banish *squint suspicion.*" *Comus.*

[19] A metaphor taken from the camp, and signifying *to surrender at discretion.* This line is not in the quartos.

Alb. The let alone lies not in your good will[20].
Edm. Nor in thine, lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine[21].
[*To* EDMUND.
Alb. Stay yet; hear reason: Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thine, attaint[22]
This gilded serpent: [*Pointing to* GON.]—for your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife;
'Tis she is subcontracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your love to me,
My lady is bespoke.
Gon. An interlude!
Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloster:—Let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon thy head,
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge; [*Throwing down a Glove.*] I'll prove it on thy heart[23],
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.
Reg. Sick, O, sick!
Gon. If not, I'll ne'er trust poison[24]. [*Aside.*
Edm. There's my exchange: [*Throwing down a Glove.*] what in the world he is

[20] *i.e.* "To obstruct their union lies not in your good pleasure, your *veto* will avail nothing."

[21] It appears from this speech that Regan did not know that Albany had discharged her forces. This line is given to Edmund in the quartos, which read "my title *good*."

[22] The folio reads, "*thy arrest*."

[23] Thus the quartos. The folio, probably to avoid the repetition of *prove it*, reads, "I'll *make it* on thy heart." In the line above, the folio has, "If none appear to prove upon thy *person*," instead of *head*.

[24] The folio has, "I'll ne'er trust *medicine*."

That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
On him, on you, (who not?) I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho!

Edm. [A herald, ho, a herald!][25]

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue[26]; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. This sickness grows upon me.

Enter a Herald.

Alb. She is not well; convey her to my tent.
[*Exit* REGAN, *led.*
Come hither, herald.—Let the trumpet sound,—
And read out this.

Off. Sound, trumpet. [*A Trumpet sounds.*

Herald *reads.*

"If any man of quality, or degree, within the lists of the army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear at the third sound of the trumpet: He is bold in his defence."

Edm. Sound. [1 *Trumpet.*
Her. Again. [2 *Trumpet.*
Her. Again. [3 *Trumpet.*
[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, *armed, preceded by a Trumpet.*

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet[27].

[25] These words are not in the folio, which also omits the words "Sound, trumpet," a few lines lower.

[26] i. e. *valour;* a Roman sense of the word. Thus Raleigh:—"The conquest of Palestine with singular *virtue* they performed."

[27] This is according to the ceremonials of the trial by combat in cases criminal. "The appellant and his procurator first come

Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?
Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn, and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope withal[28].
Alb. Which is that adversary?
Edg. What's he, that speaks for Edmund earl of Gloster?
Edm. Himself; What say'st thou to him?
Edg. Draw thy sword;
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is my privilege, the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession[29]: I protest,—
Maugre thy strength, place, youth, and eminence,
Despite[30] thy victor sword, and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour, and thy heart,—thou art a traitor:
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of thy head,
To the descent and dust beneath thy feet,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou, *No*,
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

to the gate. The constable and marshall demand by voice of herald, what he is, and why he comes so arrayed."—*Selden's Duello.*

[28] The word *withal* is omitted in the folio.

[29] "Here I draw my sword. Behold, it is the privilege or right of my profession to *draw* it against a traitor." It is *the right of bringing the charge*, and maintaining it with his sword, which Edgar calls the privilege of his profession. The quarto has merely, "Behold, it is the priviledge of my *tongue*."

[30] The folio reads, erroneously, *Despise*

Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name[31];
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some 'say[32] of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely[33] I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which (for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise),
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever[34].—Trumpets, speak.

[*Alarums. They fight,* EDMUND *falls.*

Alb. Save him, save him[35]!

Gon. This is mere[36] practice, Gloster:
By the law of arms, thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguil'd.

Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it:—Hold, sir:—
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:—
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.

[*Gives the Letter to* EDMUND.

Gon. Say, if I do; the laws are mine, not thine:

[31] Because, if his adversary was not of equal rank, Edmund might have declined the combat. Goneril afterwards says:—

" By the law of arms, thou wast not bound to answer
An *unknown* opposite."

[32] '*Say*, or *assay*, is a *sample*, a *taste*. So in the preface to Maurice Kyffin's translation of the Andria of Terence, 1588:—" Some other like places I could recite, but these shall suffice for a *say*."

[33] " What *safe* and *nicely* I might well delay."
This seems to mean " What I might *safely* well delay if I acted *punctiliously*." This line is omitted in the quartos, but without it the subsequent line is nonsense.

[34] *To that place* where they shall rest for ever. i. e. *thy heart.*

[35] Albany desires that Edmund's life may be spared at present, only to obtain his confession, and to convict him openly by his own letter.

[36] The folio omits *mere*, and in the next line has *war* for *arms*

Who shall[37] arraign me for't? [*Exit* GONERIL.
Alb. Most monstrous!
Know'st thou this paper[38]?
Edm. Ask me not what I know.
Alb. Go after her: she's desperate; govern her.
[*To an* Officer, *who goes out.*
Edm. What you have charg'd me with, that have I done;
And more, much more: the time will bring it out;
'Tis past, and so am I: But what art thou,
That hast this fortune on me? If thou art noble,
I do forgive thee.
Edg. Let's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us[39]:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got,
Cost him his eyes.
Edm. Thou'st spoken right, 'tis true;
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.
Alb. Methought, thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness:—I must embrace thee;
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee, or thy father!
Edg. Worthy prince, I know't.
Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
Edg. By nursing them, my lord.—List a brief tale:

[37] The folio reads, *can.*

[38] "Knowest thou these letters," says Leir to Regan, in the old anonymous play, when he shows her both her own and her sister's letters, which were written to procure his death, upon which she snatches the letters and tears them.

[39] The folio reads, "to *plague* us."

And, when 'tis told, O that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near (O our lives' sweetness!
That with the pain of death we'd hourly die[40],
Rather than die at once!) taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags; to assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost[41]; became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, sav'd him from despair;
Never (O fault!) reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half hour past, when I was arm'd,
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success;
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage: But his flaw'd heart
(Alack, too weak the conflict to support!)
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath mov'd me,
And shall, perchance, do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.

Alb. If there be more, more woful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.

[42][*Edg.* This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow, but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity[43].

[40] "To die hourly with the pain of death," is a periphrasis for "to suffer hourly the pains of death." The folio reads.—

"That *we* the pain of death *would* hourly die."

[41] So in Pericles:—

"Her *eyelids*, cases to those heavenly *jewels*
Which Pericles hath lost."

[42] The lines within crotchets are not in the folio.

[43] Of this difficult passage, which is probably corrupt, Steevens gives the following explanation:—"This would have seemed a period to such as love not sorrow, but—another, *i. e.* but I must

Whilst I was big in clamour, came there a man,
Who having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endur'd, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he'd burst heaven: threw him[44] on my father;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him,
That ever ear receiv'd: which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack: Twice then the trumpet sounded,
And there I left him tranc'd.

Alb. But who was this?

Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.]

Enter a Gentleman *hastily, with a bloody Knife.*

Gent. Help! help! O help!

Edg. What kind of help?

add another, *i. e.* another period, another kind of conclusion to my story, such as will increase the horrors of what has been already told." It will be necessary, if we admit this interpretation, to point the passage thus:—

"But another:—
(To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity,)
Whilst I was big," &c.

Malone's explanation is:—"This would have seemed the utmost completion of woe, to such as do not delight in sorrow, but *another*, of a different disposition, to amplify misery 'would give more strength to that which hath too much.'" Referring to the Bastard's desiring to hear more, and to Albany's thinking that enough had been said.

[44] The quartos read, "threw *me* on my father." Steevens thus defends the present reading:—"There is a tragic propriety in Kent's throwing himself on the body of a deceased friend; but this propriety is lost in the act of clumsily tumbling a son over the lifeless remains of his father." Mr. Dyce has shown how easily the error is made.

Alb. Speak, man[45].

Edg. What means that bloody knife?

Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of—

Alb. Who, man? speak.

Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poison'd; she hath confess'd it[46].

Edm. I was contracted to them both; all three
Now marry in an instant.

Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead!—
This judgement of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity[47]. [*Exit* Gentleman.

Enter KENT.

Edg. Here comes Kent, sir

Alb. O! it is he.
The time will not allow the compliment,
Which very manners urges.

Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night;
Is he not here?

Alb. Great thing of us forgot!—
Speak, Edmund, where's the king? and where's Cordelia?—
Seest thou this object, Kent?

[*The Bodies of* GONERIL *and* REGAN *are brought in.*

Kent. Alack, why thus?

[45] The words "Speak, man," are only in the folio, which has the following variation:—

"*Gent.* 'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came from the heart of—O! she's dead.
Alb. Who dead? speak, man."

[46] Thus the quarto. The folio reads, "she *confesses* it." In the arrangement of the speeches here, the quarto is followed.

[47] "If Shakespeare had studied Aristotle all his life, he would not, perhaps, have been able to mark with more precision the distinct operations of *terror* and *pity*."—*Tyrwhitt.*

Edm. Yet Edmund was belov'd:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.

Alb. Even so.—Cover their faces.

Edm. I pant for life:—Some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,—
Be brief in it,—to the castle, for my writ
Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia:—
Nay, send in time.

Alb. Run, run, O run—

Edg. To who, my lord? Who has the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Well thought on; take my sword,
Give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life[a]. [*Exit* EDGAR.

Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and
To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid[48] herself.

Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.
[EDMUND *is borne off.*

Enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his Arms*[49]; EDGAR, Officer, *and Others.*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl!—O, you are men of stones;
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so

[a] The folio erroneously assigns this speech to *Edgar.*

[48] To *fordo* signifies to *destroy.* It is used again in Hamlet, Act v.—

"Did, with desperate hand,
Fordo its own life."

[49] The old historians say that Cordelia retired with victory from the battle, which she conducted in her father's cause, and thereby replaced him on the throne: but in a subsequent one fought against her (after the death of the old king) by the sons of Regan and Goneril, she was taken, and died miserably in prison (Geoffrey of Monmouth, the original relater of the story,

That heaven's vault should crack :—She's gone for ever !—
I know when one is dead, and when one lives ;
She's dead as earth :—Lend me a looking-glass ;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promis'd end[50] ?

Edg. Or image of that horror ?

Alb. Fall, and cease[51] !

Lear. This feather stirs ; she lives ! if it be so,
It is a chance that does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

Kent. O my good master ! [*Kneeling.*

Lear. 'Pr'ythee, away.

Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all !

says that she killed herself). The dramatic writers of Shakespeare's age suffered as small a number of their heroes and heroines to escape as possible ; nor could the filial piety of this lady any more than the innocence of Ophelia, prevail on the poet to extend her life beyond her misfortunes.—*Steevens.*

[50] Kent, in contemplating the unexampled scene of exquisite affection which was then before him, and the unnatural attempt of Goneril and Regan against their father's life, recollects those passages of St. Mark's Gospel in which Christ foretells to his disciples *the end of the world,* and hence his question, " Is this the promised end of all things, which has been foretold to us ? " To which Edgar adds, or only a representation or resemblance of that horror ? So Macbeth, when he calls upon Banquo, Malcolm, &c. to view Duncan murdered, says :—

" Up, up, and see
The great doom's image ! Malcolm ! Banquo !
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this *horror.*"

There is an allusion to the same passage of Scripture in a speech of Gloster's, in the second scene of the first act.—*Mason.*

[51] To *cease* is to *die.* Albany is looking with attention on the pains employed by Lear to recover his child, and knows to what miseries he must survive, when he finds them to be ineffectual. Having these images present to his eyes and imagination, he cries out, " Rather fall, and cease to be at once, than continue in existence only to be wretched."

I might have sav'd her; now she's gone for ever!—
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha!
What is't thou say'st?—Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low; an excellent thing in woman:—
I kill'd the slave that was a hanging thee.

Off. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip[52]: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me.—Who are you?
Mine eyes are none o'the best:—I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she lov'd and hated,
One of them we behold[53].

Lear. This is a dull sight[54]: Are you not Kent?

Kent. The same;
Your servant Kent: Where is your servant Caius?

Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too:—He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord, I am the very man—

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.

[52] What Lear has just said has been anticipated by Justice Shallow, in The Merry Wives of Windsor:—"I have seen the time with my long sword I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats." It is again repeated in Othello:—

"I have seen the day
That with this little arm and this good sword
I have made my way," &c.

[53] "If Fortune, to display the plenitude of her power, should brag of two persons, one of whom she had highly elevated, and the other she had wofully depressed, we now behold the latter." The quarto reads, "She lov'd *or* hated," which confirms this sense.

[54] I think, with Mr. Blakeway, that Lear means his *eyesight* was bedimmed either by excess of grief, or, as is usual, by the approach of death. So in Baret, "*Dull* eyes, inertes oculi:"—"To *dull* the eyesight, hebetare oculos." Albany says of Lear below, "He knows not what he *sees*," where the folio erroneously reads "he *says*."

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else; all's cheerless, dark, and deadly.

Your eldest daughters have fore-doom'd[55] themselves,
And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Alb. He knows not what he sees; and vain it is
That we present us to him.

Edg. Very bootless.

Enter an Officer.

Off. Edmund is dead, my lord.

Alb. That's but a trifle here.—
You lords, and noble friends, know our intent.
What comfort to this great decay[56] may come,
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power:—You, to your rights;
[*To* EDGAR *and* KENT.
With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited[57]:—All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings.—O, see, see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd[58]! No, no, no life:

[55] Thus one of the quartos: the folio reads *foredone*, which is probably wrong, as the next words would then be mere tautology. See note 48, p. 482, ante.

[56] *This great decay* is Lear, whom Shakespeare poetically calls so; and means the same as if he had said, "this piece of decayed royalty," "this ruined majesty." Gloster calls him in a preceding scene, "ruin'd piece of nature."

[57] These lines are addressed to Kent as well as to Edgar, else the word *honours* would not have been in the plural number. *Boot* is *advantage*, *increase*. By *honours* is meant, *honourable conduct*.

[58] "This," says Steevens, "is an expression of tenderness for his dead Cordelia (not his fool, as some have thought), on whose

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!—
'Pray you, undo this button: Thank you, sir.—
Do you see this?—Look on her,—look,—her lips,—
Look there, look there!— [*He dies*

Edg. He faints!—My lord, my lord,—

Kent. Break, heart; I pr'ythee, break!

Edg. Look up, my lord.

Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him,
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

Edg. O, he is gone indeed.

Kent. The wonder is, he hath endur'd so long:
He but usurp'd his life.

Alb. Bear them from hence. — Our present business

lips he is still intent, and dies while he is searching there for indications of life. '*Poor fool*,' in the age of Shakespeare, was often an expression of endearment. The fool of Lear was long ago forgotten; having filled the space allotted to him in the arrangement of the play, he appears to have been silently withdrawn in the sixth scene of the third act. Besides this, Cordelia was recently hanged; but we know not that the Fool had suffered in the same manner, nor can imagine why he should. That the thoughts of a father, in the bitterest of all moments, when his favourite child lay dead in his arms, should recur to the antic, who had formerly diverted him, has somewhat in it that cannot be reconciled to the idea of genuine despair and sorrow.

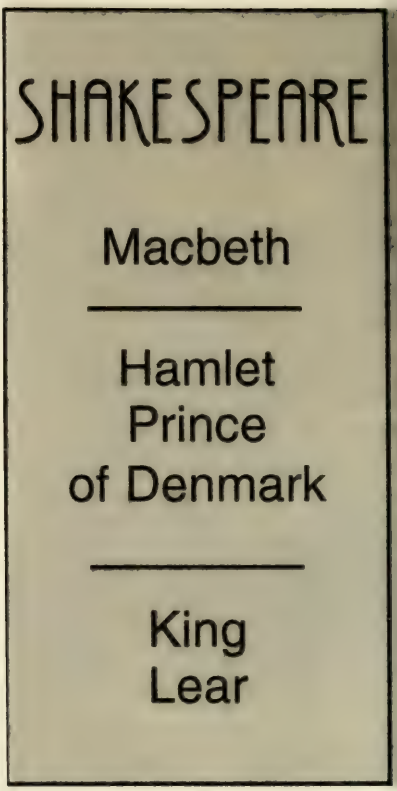
There is an ingenious note by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the Variorum Shakespeare, sustaining a contrary opinion; and the state of Lear's mind must be remembered; yet Malone observes, "Lear, from the time of his entrance in this scene to his uttering these words, and from thence to his death, is wholly occupied by the loss of his daughter.—He is now in the agony of death, and surely at such a time, when his heart was just breaking, it would be highly unnatural that he should think of his fool. He had just seen his daughter *hanged*, having unfortunately been admitted too late to preserve her life, though time enough to punish the perpetrator of the act."

Is general woe. Friends of my soul, you twain
[*To* KENT *and* EDGAR
Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain.
Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls, and I must not say, no.
[59]*Alb.* The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we, that are young,
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.
[*Exeunt, with a dead March.*

[59] In the folio, this speech is given to Edgar.

END OF VOL. IX.

CHISWICK PRESS:—C. WHITTINGHAM AND CO., TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.


SHAKESPEARE
Macbeth
Hamlet
Prince
of Denmark
King
Lear

Date Due

All library items are subject to recall 3 weeks from the original date stamped.

NOV 1 1 2002		
APR 0 2 2003		
APR 1 7 2004		
APR 0 5 2004		
SEP 2 0 2004		
SEP 0 1 2004		
NOV 2 9 2004		
JAN 0 5 2005		
NOV 1 7 2005		
FEB 0 7 2006		
FEB 0 6 2006		
FEB 0 8 2008		
FEB 0 7 2008		
JUL 1 3 2010		

Brigham Young University

3 1197 00057 4274